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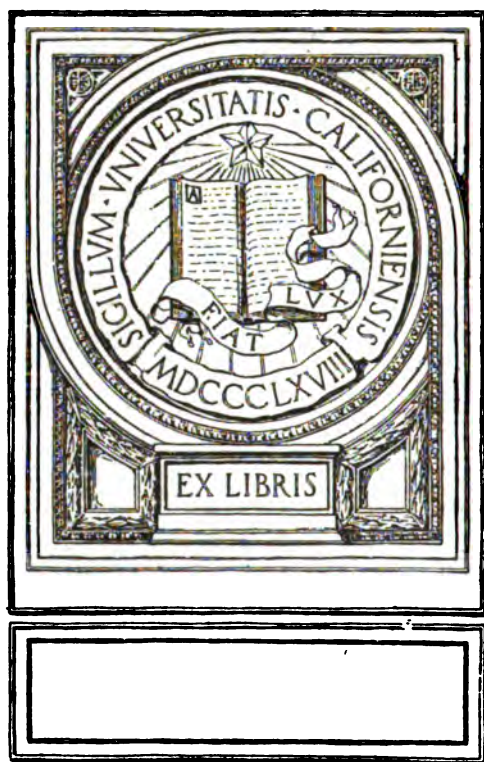
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**THE PROBLEM
OF
NATIONAL DEFENCE**

THE PROBLEM OF NATIONAL DEFENCE

BY
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IT is probable that every man who has given the smallest consideration to the subject of war has been greatly impressed by certain curious anomalies. He has found that armies have, before battle, constantly prayed to the Almighty for support, that many generals have ascribed their victories to the assistance, while others have attributed their defeats to the displeasure, of a divine power. Cromwell, a notable

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case in point, invariably, with tremendous vehemence, claimed the protection of the Almighty, asserting that it was not the arm of flesh, but the Spirit of God, which enabled him to triumph over his enemies and those of his country and of heaven. And, just of late, we have seen the Japanese generals and admirals refuse to accept the credit for their victories by land and sea, ascribing them to the virtue of the Emperor and the assistance of Heaven. But the student of war will not fail to have noticed that Cromwell, as well as all other successful leaders who have ascribed their victories to Providence, by no means put their whole trust in divine assistance, by no means disregarded the value of a worldly weapon; on the contrary, they have displayed the utmost solicitude in the construction and temper of that weapon. But why, the student asks himself, why, if the cause is just, should it be necessary to fight at all? The enemy can be destroyed, if Providence wills, as was Sennacherib's army, by the breath of the angel of the Lord; whereas, if Providence wishes to destroy you, nothing you can do will avail to avert disaster. And, then, there comes Napoleon's answer: "God marches with big battalions"; as well as the proverb: "Providence helps those who help themselves." The student remembers that proverbs are the outcome of many centuries—possibly thousands of years—of experience; and, if he be of an inquiring turn of mind, he will sooner or later seek for the truth in the pages of history or in the annals of war. He will discover that

there is such a thing as the science of tactics, or the application of force on the battlefield, and of strategy, or the preparation and application of force in the theatre of war, which, on many occasions at least, exercised, apparently, a decisive effect on the battlefield. Which of these theories is true? Is Napoleon correct—is it the case that the divine power marches with the big battalions, with the more skilful? Or is it that virtue alone is the force which wins victories? Or is it, again, the case that Providence sometimes, or perhaps always, stands aloof and pays no attention to the petty and sordid squabbles of mankind? If the first or last of these be correct, then it is evident that armaments are necessary; whereas if the second be true, all armaments are evidently not only useless and wasteful extravagance, but positive wickedness.

It is clearly a point of great importance, to Englishmen especially; for, as is very well known, there are many people in Great Britain who believe that, if the nation displays virtue in its dealings with its neighbours, the Almighty will protect it from all harm. Many go further, and maintain—and their contention is quite logical—that war in the abstract is wicked, and that the employment of force, or compulsion in any form, is criminal. Yet, again, many who hold this belief refuse, nevertheless, to follow the train of argument to its logical conclusion. Providence may surely be trusted to guard the righteous man; and a police force, also, is both wicked and unnecessary?

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No, comes the answer ; for, unfortunately, human nature is in its very essence wicked ; and men of criminal tendencies must be suppressed by force in the interests of the community. Then, are there never nations with criminal tendencies ? Should not a virtuous nation, like a virtuous man, take steps to guard itself ?

There is, again, another section of the community which considers that though virtue must in the end prosper, that yet the ways of Providence are inscrutable, that the wicked are sometimes permitted to triumph, that modern man, living in a world in which self-seeking and lack of scruple are not entirely unknown, must adopt measures to safeguard himself and his possessions by means of a police force, and that nations must act in a similar manner. These deny the justice of an aggressive war, but admit the justification for a defensive one.

There are yet others—though in Great Britain these are in a minority—who boldly assert that fraud and force dominate humanity, and that the wicked and unscrupulous usually triumph. These are inclined to laugh at national scruples. They point out that every nation which goes to war claims to have the right of it, and that controversy rages over the rights and wrongs of it sometimes for centuries after the war has terminated. These will cry out, first win your war, and then discuss the ethics of it.

Can this point not be determined by the study of history ? Is it impossible to discover the instances in

which a virtuous nation was clearly protected by the Almighty, and those in which the wicked nations were struck down by a justly incensed Providence? Or, if the application of force be the chief factor, will it not become apparent from the study of history? History is a vast storehouse of authenticated facts, which can be collected and marshalled, and from which inferences may be drawn. Are we not then justified in an attempt to arrive at some solution of this momentous problem? We Englishmen are, indeed, driven to make the attempt if we desire to seek the solution of the problem of defence in a scientific manner. For, under present circumstances, the nation is, broadly speaking, divided into four parties in time of war: the very few who fight; those who urge that the war should be prosecuted with the utmost vigour; those who weep and wring their hands, or even assist the enemy; and the great mass of the people, who consider that their duty is limited to a spirit of aloofness, that, having paid their gate-money in the shape of salaries to sailors and soldiers, they have the right to applaud or criticise according as the few fighting men of the nation display courage and ability, or the reverse.

Is it not the case, moreover, that even soldiers—and, possibly, sailors too—are still apt to regard war as of the nature of a pastime, a thing at which medals and promotion may be won, and not at all as a serious crisis in the career of a nation—a crisis which may result in defeat, to be followed, perhaps, by the utter

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misery of the whole people? General Von der Goltz, in his *Nation in Arms*, writes that "a true comprehension of the nature of war does not contribute least of all to the martial efficiency of a nation."

We shall surely do wisely, then, to glance through the history of the lives of the nations, and to form a true conception, if it be possible, of the nature of war. Let us, in the first instance, ask ourselves a definite question, and endeavour to ascertain the extent to which force affects the life of a nation.

The Israelites, having settled in Palestine, were at constant war with their neighbours. A nation of warriors, they, under the leadership of Joshua and David, struck down and subjugated the surrounding tribes. They rose rapidly to power, entered into league with the Phoenicians, and became great in commerce as they had been great in war. Under Solomon their riches were proverbial, but the people were heavily taxed to support the magnificence of the king. At the death of Solomon they appealed to Rehoboam, his successor, for a reduction of taxation. He refused, saying, "My father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions." A portion of the nation thereupon seceded; dissension and discord replaced unity of purpose; and the nation, engaged in its internal conflicts, neglected to watch its neighbours. The Assyrians, a warlike nation on its borders, came down and carried off ten tribes into captivity. Some four centuries later the remain-

ing two tribes were subjugated, and the Israelites ceased to exist as an independent nation. They were destroyed by force.

The Assyrians thereafter conquered the whole of Palestine, and quickly became the dominant power in the known world. A successful rebellion of the Babylonians, who inhabited a province of the Assyrian empire, wrested the supreme power from the hands of the Assyrians, and the Assyrian Empire became the vast and powerful Babylonian Empire. It had now no enemy to fear, for it was at peace with its neighbours, the Lydians in Asia Minor, while the barbarous Medes and Persians were at war with one another. The warrior class appears to have fallen under the domination of the priesthood ; and from having been, formerly, a nation of warriors, the community developed into a nation of civilians.

It was at this time that the Persians, under Cyrus, finally defeated the Medes ; and the two nations were amalgamated into one great military nation. The Babylonians and Lydians became frightened, and they formed an alliance against the Persians in which Egypt was included. The Babylonians and Egyptians were not ready, however, and the Lydians commenced the war single-handed. They were defeated, and their country was invaded and conquered. Meanwhile the Babylonians fortified their capital. But a few years later Cyrus attacked them ; a great battle was fought outside the walls of Babylon, in which the Babylonians were defeated ; the city was captured and

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destroyed. Egypt was, in its turn, conquered, and the boundaries of the Persian Empire were gradually extended from the Indus to the Mediterranean.

The Persians appear to have passed through the same process of evolution as the Babylonians and Egyptians before them—they ceased to be a warrior nation, and became enervated by luxury. Failing to conquer the Greeks, who at that time were a vigorous and warlike people, they themselves were conquered, and the vast empire collapsed.

Shortly before the destruction of the Persian Empire, the Athenians had risen to power as an empire of the Eastern Mediterranean. Their strength was based on the sea, and they regarded themselves as the Mistress of the Seas. At the time of their rise they had been a warrior nation, in which every man was liable to fight for his country. But their great statesman and orator, Pericles, seeing "war lowering from the Peloponnesus," thought it a fit time to discard the principle of universal liability to carry arms in favour of a mercenary system. He gained great popularity thereby ; but his prophecy proved correct, and war shortly afterwards broke out with the Spartans. The latter were a nation of land warriors with an insignificant fleet. The Athenians decided to confine their operations to the sea, and to the conquest of colonies. They fortified Athens, together with a covered way from the city to the harbour. The Spartan fleet was quickly driven into its harbours ; the Spartan armies, however, marched

overland to the neighbourhood of Athens, and drove the Athenian country inhabitants inside the walls of the city, closely blockading it on the land side. The Athenians conquered many colonies, and carried out some successful raids into Spartan territory ; but they made no serious attempt to face the Spartan armies on land, or to strike a blow at Sparta itself. Overcrowded in their city, they were suddenly stricken by a terrible plague. The war, as was often the case in those days, continued for many years. The Athenians firmly established their power on the sea ; and, finally, undertook the invasion of Sicily in place of striking at Sparta. The great invasion failed disastrously ; the power of the Athenians was sadly reduced, and the Spartans again entered upon a struggle at sea. One Spartan fleet was captured, another defeated ; but at last the Athenian fleet, resting secure in its overconfidence, was surprised and destroyed by the newly formed Spartan fleet. Athens, blockaded both by sea and land, was quickly starved into submission and forced to surrender.

The Spartans themselves were destroyed by the Thebans ; the Thebans by Alexander the Great, thirty thousand of them being sold into slavery.

The Phœnicians, a peaceful nation of merchants, had entered into league with all the great empires—the Egyptians, Israelites, Assyrians, Persians—successively ; but, in spite of their careful avoidance of war, their cities were taken, and their power utterly destroyed by Alexander the Great, to whose designs

against Persia the commerce and control of the Eastern Mediterranean were essential. The Carthaginians, an offshoot of the Phœnicians, a civilian people, and Rulers of the Seas, were destroyed by the Romans, a nation of land warriors.

But, it may be remarked, these were pagan nations ; things have been different since the advent of Christianity.

The Romans themselves, a nation of Christians, when enervated by luxury, were destroyed by barbarians. The Byzantines were reduced to impotence by their co-religionists, the Venetians and Crusaders, and were finally destroyed by the Turks.

It has been said of the Venetians that they succumbed to other causes than force, though they were finally destroyed by force. They primarily rose to prominence, and became the great commercial and maritime power of the Mediterranean, by the defeat of the Genoese. By force or fraud they obtained large territories from the Byzantines ; and for the assistance they afforded to the Crusaders they were appointed "Rulers of the Sea for ever" by the Pope. Unfortunately the Turks did not believe in the Pope, and, after a prolonged struggle, they wrested the command of the Mediterranean from the Venetians. Meanwhile, the discovery of America and the Cape route to the East transferred the bulk of the commerce of the world from Venice to Spain and Holland. But, nevertheless, the Venetians still possessed vast riches ; their wealth, and the luxury of the

upper classes, were proverbial; they were by no means ruined by the loss of their commerce. They could still afford to maintain mercenary armies, though not in sufficient numbers to withstand their numerous enemies. Their territories on the mainland were consequently conquered from them, and their boundaries were gradually pushed back to the immediate neighbourhood of Venice itself. Their power was reduced to insignificance, and, finally, their city was taken without fighting by Napoleon, and their most treasured possessions removed to France. When too late, the lower classes made an effort to resist the French invaders, but, needless to say, without success.

The Poles, the upper classes enervated by luxury, and the whole nation rendered helpless by the discord and intrigue of the nobility, were partitioned by the neighbouring nations. The lower classes, when too late, fought bravely for their independence, but without success. The Poles still make spasmodic efforts to recover their nationality, but the slightest signs of a true national resurrection will assuredly be stamped out on the instant by Germany.

Though the Spaniards are by no means an extinct nation, yet they were, at one time, in the period of the Hapsburg supremacy, the dominant power in Europe. It will be well, therefore, to inquire briefly into the causes which have led to their downfall from their high estate.

With the discovery of America and the Cape route to the East, the commerce of the world, as we have

seen, flowed into Spain and Holland, which latter country was, at that time, a dependency of the Spanish crown. With the conquest of Mexico and Peru, the vast wealth of those countries in the shape of treasure was brought to Spain, while the merchants of the Netherlands were regarded both by Charles V and Philip II as an unfailing source of wealth. The Spaniards thus suddenly became the richest nation of the day. But the commercial communities of the Netherlands rose in rebellion against the extortions of Spain, and of the vast ecclesiastical organisation which had been established by the Church, and which dominated every corner of the country.

A prolonged struggle ensued, in which the Netherlands established their power on the sea-coast of the present Holland, while the Spaniards retained control of the interior and of the coast of Belgium. The Spanish efforts to suppress the rebellion on the north-west coast proved unsuccessful, owing chiefly to the constant support which the rebels received from the British Islands. The Spaniards were thus obliged to undertake the conquest of the latter country, if they would confirm their hold on the Netherlands. The attempt was, however, frustrated by the destruction of the Spanish Armada. Thereafter the victors, the English and Dutch, interrupted the oversea communications between Spain and her American colonies ; and, gradually establishing their power on the sea, finally severed those communications, and cut off the oversea resources of the Spanish nation.

In the Thirty Years War, and the gradual rise of the French power, the overland communications between Spain and the Netherlands were similarly severed. The loss of these communications, both oversea and overland, resulted in the loss of the Netherlands and the practical secession of the colonies. At one stroke the sources of wealth were thus lost.

The Spaniards had, however, employed mercenaries; while the Spanish people, finding that wealth was to be more easily obtained from their outlying possessions than by hard work, had practically discarded all manufactures and industries, leaving these pursuits to the Moors, or Mohammedans, in the country. The wealthy classes, moreover, regarded work as beneath them, and lived in extraordinary magnificence and luxury. It was at this juncture, in the seventeenth century, just when Spain required all her resources to enable her to meet the challenge of the powerful French nation, that her fanatical king, Philip III, drove the whole Moorish population out of Spain. Spain, weakened and almost helpless, was promptly attacked by France, and her remaining possessions, north of the Pyrenees and in the Netherlands, were conquered from her. It has been estimated that, at this period, from one cause and another, the Spaniards lost some eight millions of their population. Torn by discord and dissension, without working men or fighting men, their colonies either seceded or were wrested from them by the British, they dropped rapidly to the level of a third-rate power, and sank

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into a state of lethargy, from which they only awakened by the irruption of Napoleon with his hordes of Frenchmen.

Enough examples have perhaps been given to show that it is force, pure and simple, which decides whether a nation shall continue to exist; it is by defeat in war, which seems to follow inevitably on decadence, that a nation comes by its death. If further examples are required they are to be found in the conquest of Mexico and Peru by the Spaniards; and in the destruction of the Red Indian races of North America, and of the aboriginal races of Australia, by the European colonists.

The Spartans would appear to have been the single instance of a nation which was destroyed in spite of its military efficiency; but the numbers of their men, which were limited by the law of the land, proved insufficient to hold possession of an extended empire, and the single heavy defeat which was inflicted on them by the Thebans destroyed their power and capacity to show front to the numerous enemies that rose against them in the moment of disaster. And, moreover, though still a nation of warriors, they had lost, to a great extent, that stern simplicity for which they had formerly been renowned, and which is the basis of military efficiency.

It would seem that we are justified in the assertion that no nation has died a natural death, but that all have been destroyed by war, that is, by their neighbours. If this contention be admitted, then it is a

point of tremendous significance, for the same is said, by naturalists, to be true of wild animals. It may thus be true that nations, like every form of life, are eternally engaged in the struggle for existence. This theory receives support from the study of the causes of war between nations.

Almost every military writer has been driven to the attempt to discover the causes of war. Foremost amongst those which have been given us are the ambitions of kings and princes, religious or political differences.

Of the great military historians, Jomini has given no less than nine different causes of war, all of which may, however, be combined under three heads—aggression, resistance to aggression, and religion. He himself is inclined to eliminate religion as a cause of war, and there is much evidence in history which supports his view that in most, if not in every case, a political motive underlies the religious motive.

Clausewitz is inclined to avoid the subject, and seems content to assume that war is due to the desire of one nation to impose its will on another.

These two great military writers, however, lived before the great scientists, and had never heard of the expression, the struggle for existence.

If we assume the struggle for existence as a working hypothesis, we can attempt to construct a theory of the probable causes of war in prehistoric and ancient times ; and in our endeavour we can perhaps

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find assistance from the conditions of existence of savage tribes at the present day. Let us venture the attempt, even at the risk of being regarded as pedantic theorists ; for we must remember that the much-abused theory is, after all, the basis of experimental effort and progress.

Let us conceive the first few families of man, each of them consisting of a patriarch with his sons, grandsons, and, perhaps, great-grandsons, with their wives and children. These lived principally on the proceeds of the chase. A hunting ground, the fishing in a river, would form a bone of contention between two or more such families. These things are, as we know, an unailing cause of war between savage tribes of to-day.

That family which possessed the greater number of bold and energetic men would hold a great advantage over the others, and that advantage would be materially increased if it could attack its neighbours unawares, at night time, while the victims slept. We can imagine, moreover, that two or more of these might combine, that is, form an alliance to withstand the depredations of a powerful neighbour, or to attack unexpectedly, and destroy him and seize his property. An offensive alliance, if secret, would hold certain obvious advantages—it would afford a prospect of the surprise of the adversary, and his destruction by overwhelming force ; while a mere defensive alliance, especially if it came to the knowledge of the opponent, would hand over the initiative, together with the

power of surprise and the opportunity to strike at each of the allies in turn, to the enemy.

It seems but natural that, by degrees, mankind should come to be separated—by great natural features, such as rivers, seas, deserts, and mountain ranges—into distinct clans, each one consisting of numerous families, bound together by a community of interest, the necessity for combination against the depredations of its neighbours, and that they should seek to utilise these natural boundaries as obstacles behind which to defend themselves. Or, if superior in numbers and power to their neighbours, they would naturally seek to hold both outlets to any passage which might exist across an obstacle, with a view to sudden raids and the seizure of the neighbours' property.

But as such a community increased in numbers, so it would become too large to live entirely on the proceeds of the chase ; it would be driven to keep herds of cattle, to agriculture and commerce, to expand its territories, and to conquer new lands for its surplus population. But from the moment commerce and barter made their appearance, the water-way, the river or sea, would become of importance as a means of communication, while the valley of the river on both banks would become valuable as pasturage and arable land. The more powerful community would naturally seek to control the water-way, to gain possession of both banks. Or, it might be, that a community, existing with difficulty in a sterile and inhospitable

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region, would seek to oust its neighbours from the rich and fertile valleys.

And now, if we turn to history, we find much evidence in support of this theory. Constantly, from the earliest periods, we find that communities living in sterile regions have sought to drive out their more fortunate neighbours. Thus the Arabians, not content with their deserts, forced their way into Palestine, the valleys of the Tigris, Euphrates, and the Nile. The German barbarians, with their vast and steadily increasing numbers, could at last no longer be restrained by the might of the Roman Empire. The Norsemen, from their bleak home, drove southwards across the sea, forming settlements in France, the British Islands, and on the Mediterranean coasts. While, in later days, the Scottish Highlanders were with the utmost difficulty tied down to their mountain fastnesses.

But yet more useful evidence is to be found in a consideration of the influence of water-ways on the existence of nations. The Romans, having conquered Italy, pressed oversea to the conquest of Sicily, the north coast of Africa, Spain, Greece, Palestine, and Egypt; the Mediterranean was converted into a Roman lake. The Saracens were not content with Asia and Africa; they forced their way across the Mediterranean into Europe, through Spain into France, through Turkey to the very gates of Vienna, into Italy and the south of France. The English sought, for a hundred years, to achieve the conquest

of France. The Spaniards, controlling the Netherlands, found it necessary, as has been seen, to attempt the conquest of the British Islands; the Dutch assisted the English in the innate conviction that the subjugation of the British Islands must involve the ultimate and complete subjugation of the Netherlands. Thereafter the four western nations of Europe—England, France, Holland, and Spain—fought indiscriminately with each other for the control of the narrow waters, as well as for the control of the Atlantic and the further bank.

At the end of the fifteenth century the Danes had practically established their control over the outlet of the Baltic, exacting dues from all other nations who sought to obtain either ingress or egress. The Swedes wrested this control from the Danes; but not content with their success, sought to convert the Baltic into a Swedish lake, and to conquer and annex the territories which surround it. The Russians, since their rise to power as a great nation, have sought to convert the Black Sea into a Russian lake; while the intention to deal similarly with the Baltic, in time, has been constantly ascribed to them. Since the destruction of the Russian fleets fears have been expressed that the Germans may, in the future, endeavour to establish control over the Baltic; the late expedition of the British fleet into that sea appears to have been accepted as a hint that so long as the British power exists, German pretensions will not be admitted, for we now see—or, so it has been reported—the

Germans enter into league with the Danes to ensure the control of the entrance in time of war. The Japanese have lately forced their way across the narrow waters into Corea and Manchuria, and now control those waters. The French and the Germans have fought for centuries for dominion on both banks of the Rhine; the French, having in 1870-1 been driven from the Rhine, have pressed across the Mediterranean, in the line of least resistance, into North Africa; and by the establishment of judiciously placed naval bases, seek, apparently, to ensure their supremacy in the Western Mediterranean.

Is it the case that these great struggles have been due to the mere ambition of kings or statesmen? Are they not rather due to the ambition of nations or to vital necessity? Was it ambition or vital necessity which impelled the Spanish Empire to attempt the conquest of England? The Spaniards failed, and from that day the gradual decay of the nation dates. Was it ambition or vital necessity which impelled the Japanese to strike for a footing on the mainland? Will it be ambition or vital necessity which will, in the future, impel the Germans to strike out for the absolute control of seas and of new territories?

The necessity for expansion, for an appropriation of fresh territory on which to settle the surplus population, is, it seems probable, a fruitful source of war. An almost irresistible and unconscious movement of whole nations occurs from time to time which can

only be accounted for by such an explanation. When such a movement takes place, it can only be checked and finally brought to a standstill by the opposition of an equally vigorous and more powerful adversary ; but, then, it merely turns into the line of least resistance.

It appears to be the case that the movement of a people often receives an impulse in a certain direction by pressure on the other side. Thus hordes of barbarians, escaping from the savage Huns, prayed for territories south of the Danube in the eastern Roman Empire, and, being refused, forced their way in, and were only stopped in their advance on Byzantium by the cunning of the Emperor, who diverted them towards the western Roman Empire. We read that the German forests and morasses were, after the great invasions of the Roman Empire, still seething with vast multitudes of barbarians, and that their numbers had not apparently diminished in the smallest degree. The westward movement of the Turks through Asia Minor, which had been temporarily checked by the Byzantines and the furious counterstrokes of the Crusaders, appears to have received a fresh impulse from the pressure of the Mongols on their eastern borders. The Turks then forced their way through the Balkan Peninsula, and were only finally brought to a standstill by the vigorous nations of Central Europe. Is it not possible that another such vast national movement is about to commence, where so many others are believed to have originated—in Eastern

Asia? There is no reason to doubt that these national movements take place to-day, as in ancient times ; the difference lies in the fact that whereas in the days of antiquity they appear to have been unconscious or but semi-conscious, to-day they are foreseen, premeditated, and prepared.

Are we not justified in the assertion that war is as often due to vital necessity as to ambition ; that it is generally due to a combination of both ; and that it is almost impossible for us to judge which of these two motives is the one by which a nation is actuated ? Should we not say that war arises from the struggle to exist ? If that be so, then our whole conception of the nature of war becomes altered ; it is no game at which the bulk of the people should stand aloof and look on to applaud or criticise ; it is a serious matter in which every man, woman, and child of a community is deeply concerned.

The study of history gives us numberless examples which all point to the inference that war, not only between nations, but between various sections of a community, is due to the desire to merely exist, to win comfort and luxury, or to satisfy ambition. The three motives would seem to be but one—self-interest. Men band together from motives of self-interest ; and is this sentiment not the cause of that unceasing class hostility, that never-ending struggle between rich and poor, which is to be found in every page of history, and which has existed in every community, whether ancient or modern ?

The student of war will fail to find a single case in history of a community which has engaged in war in pursuit of some high ideal alone, unaccompanied by some very strong, if hidden, motive of self-interest.

There are many who will take exception to this statement, who will point to the wars of the Reformation, to those of the French Republic, and to the War of Secession in America. Were not these, they will ask, entered upon in pursuit of a high ideal—religious freedom, liberty, and the abolition of slavery? But if we examine into the causes of these wars, we find that a pronounced motive of self-interest underlay, in each case, the high ideal.

As regards the wars of the Reformation, it is very noticeable that the numerous creeds that arose on all sides conformed to the political ideas of the exponents. Thus Lutheranism in North Germany sought to prove that there was no divine warrant for the pretension of the Church to control both the minds, bodies, and possessions of the people throughout the world. It appears to have been merely the religious expression of a sentiment which had already taken a firm hold on the minds of the secular rulers of the countries of Northern Europe which were furthest removed from the influence and resources of the Church. The movement received powerful support from those princes who wished to be masters in their own dominions; and it was eagerly caught at by the business communities of the Netherlands, which sought to throw off the Spanish domination together

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with the ecclesiastical supremacy and system of extortion with which it was so closely interwoven. But then, it will be argued, this so-called religious war arose in pursuit of the high ideal of liberty. In answer to this argument we may point out that the reformers not only cut adrift from the orthodox Church, but seized its vast possessions; and that it was the attempt of the Emperor Charles V to oblige the Protestant states of North Germany to relinquish their booty which was the real cause of these wars, which were distinctly predatory in their origin.

Henry VIII, "Defender of the Faith"—that is, of the Catholic faith—adopted and introduced the Reformation into England in order that he might divorce his wife, become undisputed master in his own dominions, seize the wealth of the Church, and thus avoid the dangerous expedient of the taxation of the people. The movement of revolt against the ecclesiastical supremacy had, indeed, commenced many centuries before Lutheranism made its appearance, and had only failed in the days of Wycliffe and Huss owing to the vast strength of the ecclesiastical organisation. These wars were undoubtedly of the same nature as that struggle between rich and poor which is eternally in progress; they were the first direct blow struck by democracies against despotism since the break-up of the Roman Empire, and since the formation of the new European nations. This blow was struck at the despotism which was most apparent—that of the

Church. The movement, having been successful, quickly developed, in Western Europe, into a movement against the despotism of kings, and found its religious expression in Calvinism, which had its origin in Switzerland, the birthplace of democracy.

Calvinism denied the necessity for bishops or high Church functionaries, and sought to place the ecclesiastical power in the hands of councils of presbyters, partly ministers, partly laymen. It maintained that all men were predestined to be good or wicked, foredoomed to eternal happiness or to eternal damnation. It is evident that if a bishop and a swineherd are neither of them responsible for their actions, the one can be no better than the other ; and this was a religion eminently suited to the needs of a community about to revolt against its rulers. Calvinism made its way through Holland, and arrived, in the shape of Presbyterianism and Puritanism, in the British Islands, shortly before the Great Rebellion. The former was taken up by the Scots ; the latter was caught at eagerly by the rebels in England. For it had become even more democratic than Calvinism ; it denied the right of ecclesiastical assemblies to dictate even in religious matters, and maintained the absolute religious freedom of all men.

But these movements were not allowed to pass unchallenged. The Jesuitical creed, or the counter-reformation, was, as its name implies, an attempt to check the spread of the Reformation and to re-establish the supremacy of the orthodox religion. It was finally

successful in Poland, South Germany, France, and Spain, the countries which lay closest to the central power of the orthodox church.

Arminianism also arose to combat Calvinism. "In Arminianism," in Mr. Morley's words, "Predestination was countered by Free Will";¹ or, in other words, the bishop and the prince were better men than the swineherd. It was evidently suited to the requirements of a ruling class in its resistance to the rebellious masses. Arminianism was brought to England, where it was adopted by the Court party, and gradually developed into Episcopalianism. To quote Mr. Morley again, Arminianism "rapidly became in England the corner-stone of faith in a hierarchy, a ceremonial Church, and a monarchy." An ecclesiastical organisation, with great Church functionaries and their subordinates, was the essence of Episcopacy, and, as is obvious, such a system is a valuable support to a throne. It was the method adopted by Philip II of Spain to bolster up his supremacy in Holland, and it was equally the manner in which Charles I sought to establish his supremacy in England and Scotland. These "religious wars" would appear to have been the outcome of class hostility; and the fact should not be disregarded that this class hostility—the movement of democracy against despotism, of the masses against the privileged classes, of poverty against wealth—is distinctly predatory in its origin. It is in progress in most countries of the world at

¹ *Oliver Cromwell*, by John Morley.

this present day, even as it was a notable feature of the histories of the ancients.

As to the close relation between political and religious disputes there can be no doubt, for, as Mr. Morley writes, "all history shows us how theological ideas abound in political aspects to match." The question arises, does religion give rise to political dispute, or does the latter give rise to the former? There is certainly much evidence in history to show that religious dispute is the outcome of political dispute, and that the variations of religious dogma are very often evolved, accepted, and utilised as a means to an end, not only by individual men, but by whole communities. And in this connexion we may again quote Mr. Morley: "In the sardonic dialogue upon these times which he calls *Behemoth*, Hobbes says that it is not points necessary to salvation that have raised all the quarrels, but questions of authority and power over the Church, or of profit and honour to Churchmen. In other words, it has always been far less a question of what to believe, than of whom to believe. 'All human opinions, even those of theologians, have secret motives in the conduct and character of those who profess them' (Nisard)."

This problem of religion and war is, however—it will be freely admitted—a vast problem which can by no means be thus summarily disposed of. But it is sufficient for our present purpose to show that there exists good reason to believe that all war has been due to self-interest and to the predatory instinct.

It is very likely for this reason that the great empire, which has nothing to gain and everything to lose by war, will always seek to avoid a serious war ; while the poverty-stricken nation, with everything to gain and little to lose, will seldom hesitate. Deeper study of these questions will probably disclose the fact that all war, whether civil or external, is due to economic causes, and that religious differences, though they undoubtedly serve to embitter a struggle, are never in themselves a cause of war.

The wars of the French Republic are now recognised as having been due, in the first instance, to resistance on the part of the French to the aggression of the neighbouring monarchies, which feared the spread of the revolutionary doctrines, and, incidentally, sought to take advantage of the helplessness of France ; and, later, to the national ambition of the French, a predatory instinct.

As regards the War of Secession in America, Colonel Henderson tells us that, between North and South, there "had gradually sprung up a spirit of bitter hostility, created by collision on questions of the tariff and finance, and intensified by a wide difference in social life and habits." He points out that the abolition of slavery was quite an indirect cause of war, even if it existed as a cause of war at all ; that the North drew the sword to punish the South as rebels, "and by no means with the purpose of giving freedom to the slaves."¹

¹ *The Science of War.*

If history teaches true, there is no resting-place for nations ; they must fight on, and either destroy their enemies or meet destruction at their hands. War would appear to be mere competition between nations ; that is, "natural selection" would seem to be a law of nature which is as applicable to the world of nations as it is to the animal and vegetable worlds. It is an indisputable fact that progress is impossible without rivalry and competition ; and it would really appear that nature, like the British public, refuses to tolerate a monopoly or a "trust." Healthy rivalry is, at all times, apt to degenerate into jealousy, which, in its turn, unless there exists some object of hate common to both rivals, develops quite naturally into bitter hostility. Hence it is, perhaps, that, after a prolonged period of peace with neighbouring nations, the rivalry and competition for supremacy between various sections of a community become embittered, and often develop into civil war. And, on the other hand, victory over a foreign nation is generally a preventive of civil war, while defeat is the almost certain forerunner of it. The explanation of this fact appears to be simple ; for victory brings prosperity, and while that prosperity lasts the cause of civil war is removed.

There are those who maintain that as the people obtain greater power they will put a stop to war. But are there any grounds for such a belief ? Certainly not if there is any truth in the conception that the chief cause of war is the self-interest or the struggle of

communities to exist. The Athenian democracy was by no means averse to war if anything—the property of its neighbours—was to be gained by it. There never was such an unscrupulous overlord as the Athenian democracy. It preached freedom, but it enslaved the people of its dependencies, taxing and bleeding them to the uttermost, utterly regardless of right or wrong, considering its own immediate interests only. The Roman Republic was the most warlike nation of the world, and, as we have seen, was by no means content with the conquest of Italy, but wiped from existence its great rival, the Carthaginians. The English Parliament, “the Rump,” having triumphed over the king, did not hesitate to declare war against the Dutch, in the hope—as some historians say—that the expected naval victories would throw into the shade the victories of Cromwell and the army, by whom its supremacy was threatened. The watchword of the French Republic, “Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality,” was very quickly transformed into a war-cry. Even the great champions of freedom in Great Britain were, in the end, forced to admit that their sympathies with the struggles of the French people had been misplaced. The numerous Italian republics were at constant war. Genoa reduced its rival, Pisa, to impotence, and, itself, fell before Venice.

There seems no reason to believe that a world of democracies will prove less warlike than the world as constituted in the present or in the past. The

reverse is, indeed, the case, inasmuch as nations will be more easily moved by popular excitement. To urge that the French Republic and the British and American democracies are eminently peaceful is no argument, for these nations, at present, find ample scope for their energies. But when the Panama Canal is completed, will the United States permit Great Britain to retain her present possessions in the West Indies without an appeal, if necessary, to force ?

But let us regard facts as they are. Is a world of democracies probable in the near future ? It is still doubtful that the Russian revolution will succeed, or that the people will gain the upper hand.¹ In Germany, a great and successful revolution alone can place the supreme power in the hands of the people ; and, moreover, there seems no particular desire on the part of the people to assume the supreme power. The present ruling classes in Germany have organised the whole nation as a machine of war, and will probably hold their own, not only against the Socialists, but against a world of democracies. German Socialists themselves admit that a revolution in the country is impossible.

It is thus the case that, even though it were true that war would cease in a world of democracies, yet

¹ It is noticeable that the era of assassination has recommenced in Russia. "Atrocities" are to revolution as guerilla is to organised warfare. An established government is seldom overturned by such means.

it seems probable that that happy consummation could only be arrived at through a sea of blood. For if all the nations of Europe and America were democracies, they must yet impose their will on Asia—on China, Japan, and Turkey—by war. Or, if they fail to do so, and prefer to turn their swords into reaping-hooks, there would then exist the danger that a great wave of unchecked invasion might sweep over unwarlike Europe and America.

There are, again, those who argue that the great size of modern armaments is a direct incentive to war—a contention which, if history speaks true, is quite untenable. As far back as the sixth century the Lombards and Romans sought to “enjoy what they already possessed,” and, with that object in view, agreed to lay down their arms. They were, nevertheless, at war with one another within a few years; and the Lombards were destroyed about two hundred years later by the French under Pepin. During two or three centuries in the Middle Ages, Europe passed through a period in which regular armaments were unknown; war was, however, of constant occurrence; and the whole of Central Europe and Italy fell into the grip of mercenary bands—the most terrible page of European history. Since the time of the Lombards there have been many attempts to check the growth of armaments; they have all failed; and have generally been the immediate precursor of war. A suggestion to disarm has, indeed, very often been but the cloak for some sinister

design ; and it is, consequently, justly regarded, to-day, on all sides, with grave suspicion.

The student will find in history but little, if any, evidence to show that a nation has ever been saved from destruction by the obvious and direct intervention of Providence ; and neither will he find a case in which righteousness, unsupported by force, has triumphed in war, or even enabled a people to live at peace with its neighbours. There is, however, one notable instance of an eminently righteous action which, there is good reason to believe, plunged a nation, not only into the horrors of war, but of defeat. Saint Louis of France, acting in the conviction that his predecessor had wrongfully seized the possessions of the English king in France, restored those possessions to Henry III of England.¹ Edward III of England, in putting forward his pretensions to the French throne, was, undoubtedly, influenced by a consideration of the large territories in France, of which he was the overlord. He, and his successors, moreover, utilised these possessions as a base of operations ; and for a hundred years the French people were reduced to the utmost misery by the incursions and conquests of the English. The belief that Saint Louis of France would receive a reward for his benevolence, or that Edward III, the pattern of chivalry, was destined to suffer punishment for his crime, in the world to come, can have afforded little, if any, consolation to the French people of that period.

¹ See Hallam.

We may, perhaps, with advantage quote a notable instance in which the weak was trodden underfoot by the strong, and in which Providence stood aloof and—so far as we can see—made not the smallest attempt to intervene.

The Emperor Charles VI of Germany, seeking to ensure the succession at his death of a female heir, Maria Theresa, purchased at great cost the consent of the powers of Europe to his designs.¹ He trusted to the good faith of these powers, and neglected his armed forces. At his death, Frederick the Great of Prussia, who possessed the finest army in Europe, in which he had complete confidence, immediately seized Silesia. The neighbouring powers, France, Spain, Bavaria, and Saxony, forgetting their engagements, seeing only the weakness of Maria Theresa, and the strength of Frederick, immediately joined in an attack upon Austria. Frederick the Great, having achieved his desire, secretly threw over his allies, making a private compact with Austria, and engaging to stand neutral in consideration of the cession of Lower Silesia. To his astonishment, however, the allies defeated the Austrians without his assistance, capturing Prague. He thereupon denied all knowledge of the secret compact and invaded Moravia. Maria Theresa, however, displayed the highest courage, and her newly raised armies more than held their own. England also intervened with diplomacy, seeking to bring about peace between Frederick and the Austrians in order

¹ The Pragmatic Sanction.

that the latter might turn their full attention to France. Frederick emerged from the struggle master of the whole of Silesia.

There is no sign that Providence concerned itself in the slightest degree with this unprovoked and unchivalrous attack upon an unfortunate princess. It is true that a coalition was afterwards formed against Frederick, and that Prussia was brought to the brink of ruin ; but Frederick, nevertheless, emerged the ultimate victor, and never relaxed his grip on Silesia. Providence may, indeed, be said to have sided with Frederick rather than with the deeply wronged princess ; for in 1762, when the fortunes of Frederick were reduced to their lowest ebb, Elizabeth, the Czarina of Russia, his bitter foe, died, making way for the hero-worshipper, Peter III, who not only concluded peace with Frederick, but restored to him, without indemnity, the country east of the Oder which had been conquered by the Russian armies during the war.

Frederick the Great and Catharine of Russia agreed to promote anarchy in Poland. Their intrigue was crowned with success, and a few years later occurred the first partition of that country. A similar course was adopted as regards Sweden ; but, fortunately for that country, the state of anarchy was brought to a close by the *coup d'état* executed by Gustavus III. It may be that in 1806 Providence punished Prussia for the unscrupulous actions of Frederick the Great, and there are those who argue that his system led directly

to the downfall ; but, in that case, it will be admitted that the chastisement was long deferred ; that it fell on the innocent ; and that it might have been avoided if the nation had displayed greater military efficiency, and if its rulers had displayed the same high standard of leadership, practical if unscrupulous, as that which distinguished Frederick the Great.

There is an overwhelming mass of evidence which tends to show that the existence of nations is dependent on force alone, that is, on warlike efficiency ; and that when a nation has been destroyed, it has suffered defeat owing to an obvious insufficiency of force, or to an equally obvious misapplication of its available force. The very expression, so commonly used, the balance of power, shows that this fact is very generally appreciated throughout the modern world ; for balance of power means, evidently, balance of force. The view that the safety of a nation is assured by divine protection appears to be utterly opposed to the teaching of history. It may yet be, however, that the old adage of the ancients is correct, and that "those whom the gods wish to destroy they first dement," is true. In that case, the madness invariably takes the form of unreadiness for war, of discord in place of unity of purpose, of a false conception of war, and, above all, of unscientific national leadership.

But, it will be said, such a conception of war, though it may be in accordance with the teaching of history, is yet utterly opposed to the teaching of Christianity.

It may be so ; but yet it will be admitted by all that the relation of Christianity to war is a vast and, at present, an insoluble problem. Is not this science of war one of the riddles of the universe—the great riddle of the universe—on the study of which the great scientists of the past fifty years have been engaged ? Is it not closely connected with the problem of the origin of life ? Is not war all around us, in our very blood, a part of our being ? It is not a problem to be dogmatically solved in accordance with preconceived notions, to be put lightly aside with the apparently unfounded statement that war is “wicked.”

But, again, it will be said, if war is due to self-interest, we Christians have no choice but to stigmatise it as wicked. But let us look at facts as they are, not as we would wish them to be. In the times of the Crusades,¹ the Pope and the Sultan of the Saracens held up practically the same inducements to their warriors, Christians and Mohammedans. The soldier was told that, if he fought for his faith, he would enjoy eternal happiness hereafter ; that, in addition, if he fought bravely, he might win material rewards in this world, that he might carve out a principality for himself with his sword, that he might win wealth. Each leader absolved his followers of their debts, while the Pope, at least, gave absolution for crimes. The Mohammedan leader drew attention to the beauty of the houris in Paradise ; the Pope pointed significantly to the beauty of the Grecian women.

¹ See Gibbon.

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It was not altogether a high ideal that induced the bulk of the Crusaders and Mohammedans to fight bravely. It may, however, be argued that the Popes themselves were actuated by the highest motives, though the means they employed were not entirely above reproach. But then, again, we find that large numbers of the more fanatical Christian devotees poured their wealth into the lap of the Church ; that the sale of absolutions was a source of vast profit to the Church ; that by the Crusades the fighting men were withdrawn from Europe ; and that the Church was left in possession, not only of all the wealth, but of the undisputed supremacy, throughout Europe. There is no reason to believe, if we study the history of the rise to supremacy of the Church in detail, that the Popes were blind to the material advantages they would themselves gain by the Crusades. Or, again, it will be said, that surely those fanatical devotees who cast away their wealth and material interests in this world, who cast away even their lives—surely, they were actuated by a high ideal? They cast away their lives in search of a heavenly crown and of eternal happiness hereafter. All religions are, after all, in their fundamental aspects, based on self-interest. So also—curious anomaly that it is—is patriotism, or the spirit of self-sacrifice for the good of the community. Its display is merely an essential measure of self-defence.

It will be seen that the study of war leads us into very deep waters. But are we, therefore, because this

riddle is insoluble to our limited understanding, to disregard the patent facts from history which stare us in the face ; are we to stake the future of our country, the well-being, or the very lives, of our women-folk and children, on what may prove to be a false conception? Are we, then, ourselves children that we should shudder and turn aside from the contemplation of unpleasant, or even horrible, facts? It will surely be small consolation to us in the moment of defeat to believe that our wicked and unscrupulous enemy is doomed to receive heavy punishment two to three hundred years hence in this world, and that his criminal leaders will suffer in the world to come. It would be wiser in us to recognise that the unscrupulous nation has generally gained success in this world, has won comfort, luxury, and satisfied its ambition.

If we are to judge from history, it is war and readiness for war, which keep nations mentally and physically vigorous ; without these all progress ceases. It is difficult, if not impossible, to find a case of a vigorous, thoroughly efficient, up-to-date, and progressive nation which has suffered defeat in war ; except it be a petty community which has been overwhelmed and absorbed by a vigorous and powerful neighbour.

Let us hear what Ruskin has to say on the matter. "I found, in brief," he writes, "that all great nations learned their truth of word, and strength of thought, in war ; that they were nourished in war, and wasted by peace ; taught by war, and deceived by peace ;

trained by war, and betrayed by peace ; in a word, that they were born in war, and expired in peace."

It may be that the Almighty raised Alexander the Great to destroy the Persians ; that he brought Napoleon into this world, trained him, and used him as a weapon, with some definite purpose in view. But is it then impious in us to point out that all evidence tends to show that this object is progress, and the destruction of the unprogressive nations ?

A British orator has lately held up to us "Peace, progress, and culture" as the aim of our national endeavour. It is a high-sounding phrase and a beautiful ideal, but, like many such, it disregards the stern realities of life. For peace is, as all history tells us, possible only with a perfect balance of force ; progress is the child of competition, which apparently, so far as nations are concerned, is war ; while culture is, as history again tells us, the first and most direct result of war, due probably to the vast energy engendered by the effort to win, and which, after victory, seeks an outlet in literature, the arts, sciences, and invention. "Hence," writes Machiavelli, "wise men have observed that the age of literary excellence is subsequent to that of distinction in arms, and that in cities and provinces great warriors are produced before philosophers." And more than this, national prosperity, as well as general progress, follows hard on the heels of victory—as witness the German nation at the present day—while all these—progress, culture, and prosperity—very often dis-

appear with defeat. As notable examples, we may mention the Athenians and the Poles, the Dutch after their successful rebellion against the Spaniards, and the British after the Napoleonic wars ; but it is true of all nations.

It may be that future generations will solve the great riddle of war, the relation of religion to war and of war to life ; but, in the meantime, let us face fearlessly the fact that all nations of the past have been destroyed by war ; that it is but a fair inference that nations of the present and future will meet their doom through the same agency ; and that weakness in a nation, whatsoever its cause, is a certain precursor of attack. This war is a fearful thing which passes the bounds of our comprehension—a thing of divine origin, a terrible weapon employed, possibly—who knows ?—to ensure that nations and mankind shall display efficiency and make progress, or cease to exist. We, with our limited understanding, cannot fathom the designs of the Almighty ; we cannot solve the riddles of the universe ; we can merely assert that such riddles exist, and scratch at the surface of them. Nay, we can do more ; we can study history, we can use our intelligence, we can seek to ascertain the means by which nations have won victory in the past, and we can infer the means by which nations may win victory in the future. We can also say that war, that is the period of hostilities, appears to be the decisive phase in the national struggle for existence, and that it is by victory alone that a nation can

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establish its right to exist. If these facts could be faced fearlessly by all men, if the forces of the world could be neatly balanced, if all nations could at all times be in constant readiness for war, could render themselves thoroughly efficient, and devote their whole attention to true scientific progress, then, indeed, the day of universal peace might be at hand, except for that eternal and unceasing struggle between rich and poor. But here, again, it is the balance of force which averts open class warfare. Peace is the result of fear.

Having regard to the fact that nations of the world have all succumbed to force, let us turn to the consideration of what it is that constitutes this force, and the manner in which it should be scientifically applied.

CHAPTER II

THE PRINCIPLE OF SUCCESS IN WAR

The composition of force—The application of force—Examples—Sudden and unexpected concentration—Surprise, secrecy, rapidity—Necessity for organisation and preparation in peace time—The application of overpowering force at a vital point the principle of success in theatre of hostilities or on the battlefield—Is it also applicable to national strategy?—Offensive and defensive—Examples—Morally aggressive war—Examples—Principle of success holds good of national strategy—Unscrupulous nations—National virtues—Chances of national success in war may be gauged.

“**F**ORCE” in war has been divided into moral and physical. Clausewitz tells us that the moral powers “are the Talents of the Commander ; the Military Virtue of the Army ; its National feeling.” Colonel Henderson, in *The Science of War*, describes moral force as “that almost indefinable force which Napoleon declared was as to the physical, that is to numbers, armament, and physique, as three to one.” And again he writes that moral force is the art of trading on the fears and susceptibilities of the opponent ; that it lies in the power of a general to see deep into the mind of the hostile leader, to realise that leader’s weaknesses, to take advantage of them, and to upset his mental equilibrium. But surely, then, this moral force is principally the skill of the leader, that is, the application of force. Let us, there-

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fore, first consider the composition of physical force, and thereafter the application of it.

The first thing we learn from the study of history is that numbers alone do not constitute force. The wars of Alexander the Great against the Persians, of the Romans, Spaniards, British, French, against barbarians, as well as the history of popular risings, show that armed mobs, even in vastly superior numbers, are perfectly helpless against trained, disciplined, and organised troops. Perhaps the clearest lesson of all is to be found in the later stages of the Franco-German War of 1870-1.

The wars between trained troops and barbarians, between the English and French in the fourteenth century, the war of 1866 between the Prussians and the Austrians, as well as many others—the fight between David and Goliath, for instance—teach the value of a long-range weapon, or of better armament, by means of which the enemy can be practically destroyed before he can come to close quarters.

The wars of Wallenstein and Tilly, the great mercenary leaders, teach that mercenaries will seldom fight to a finish, especially when opposed by patriots ; but numerous other wars teach that patriotic or religious enthusiasm are of little value if unaccompanied by discipline, organisation, and training. The religious and patriotic enthusiasm and fanatical courage of the Dervishes, for instance, availed them but little against the highly trained and well-armed forces of Lord Kitchener. Cromwell's Ironsides, however,

show that when all these qualities are combined, the result is the production of a very powerful force, which is, indeed, almost invulnerable except against a force superior in these qualities and more scientifically applied. We have another example of this fact in the Swiss infantry of the Middle Ages. They were noted for their discipline and training as well as for their patriotism; any man who fled from the battlefield suffered death by the law of the land at the hands of the public executioner. But many wars, again, teach that numbers are by no means unimportant. Nelson says, "Numbers only can annihilate"; while Clausewitz asserts that Napoleon, in spite of his genius, could never win a battle against double his own numbers of European troops. Hannibal could defeat vastly superior numbers in the field, but he could never strike a death-blow at Rome itself for lack of men. When he menaced the city, every man and boy capable of bearing arms crowded to the walls for its defence. His troops were mercenaries, and his government would not keep him supplied with reinforcements.

The history of all war shows that battles are won by troops who will march deliberately and enthusiastically to what appears to be certain death, who are also well organised and well disciplined, and whose armament and training are up to date. Modern wars merely teach the same lesson as ancient wars; and the clearest illustration of all is given by the Japanese, whose spirit has been aptly described as "scientific

fanaticism." Physical force is made up, primarily, of the martial qualities, discipline, organisation, training, armament ; and, if to these, patriotic or religious enthusiasm be added, the force is vastly increased. When the martial qualities, armament, and leadership are equal, numbers become decisive ; and where superiority in numbers, in armament, and in the martial qualities exists, victory follows almost as a matter of course if the force be scientifically applied.

But superiority in numbers and in the martial qualities are quite useless unless the leadership, that is, the education, not only of the chief, but of all the commissioned and non-commissioned ranks, is of a high order. With good leadership, all things are possible—with bad, nothing is possible. For the good leader will quickly inculcate the martial qualities into the forces under his control. With a bad leader, however, even discipline is impossible ; for every capable subordinate will very soon appreciate at its full significance the incapacity of his chief. Ignorance or incapacity are apt to arouse not merely pity, but contempt ; and either of these sentiments in a subordinate is quite inconsistent with true discipline. A grave reduction of force is the immediate result of the slightest lack of discipline, or any one of the martial qualities. All these martial qualities, indeed, are intimately connected one with the other ; and a deficiency in any one will involve a corresponding deficiency in the others. But of all these, the education of the officers is of far the most importance.

For on it depends the courage and individual intelligence of the men, the power of initiative on the part of subordinates, the power to trust subordinates on the part of superiors, and the intelligent co-operation between the various infinitesimal parts of the machine. The happy conjunction of the martial qualities and of a thorough military education, forms the groundwork of a general and well-justified feeling of confidence throughout all ranks, which is known as the military spirit, or military virtue, of an armed force; and the possession of which is a vital element of success. It is, indeed, the vital point of any armed force; and once this spirit is broken down, an army or a navy becomes a demoralised rabble, which is powerless. It is to rousing this spirit in his own force, and to the destruction of it in that of the enemy, that the great leader invariably turns his first attention. If he can outwit the hostile leader, and "upset his mental equilibrium," his purpose is more than half achieved; for the military spirit is born in the capacity and self-confidence of the chief. If that self-confidence is misplaced, the military spirit is a false sentiment, which gives way at the first shock to hopeless despondency. It is then that an armed force lies at the mercy of its foe.

And thus it is that, in a consideration of the education of the officers and of the military spirit, we come naturally to the question of leadership, and so, to the application of force; for the application of force is the province of leadership. And as

Colonel Henderson writes, "it should never be forgotten that success depends far more on the skill of the general than on the efficiency of the troops"; or, in other words, that victory depends far more on the application of force than on the constitution of it. Napoleon, as has been seen, gives us the ratio as three to one.

In our study of the application of force, we cannot do better, in the first instance, than quote Colonel Henderson. "War," he writes, "is no exact science; it has no fixed code of rules. All that can be said is that there is one good working principle—the concentration of superior force at the decisive point—which, if applied, will generally bring about success; and a good many others which it is risky, but not necessarily fatal, to infringe." And again, "There are certain principles which serve as guides; and it will be seen that they are all accessory to a rule of strategy which is intimately connected with that which bids us strike at the enemy's communications, viz. *the concentration of superior strength, physical and moral, on the field of battle.*"

In the period of Spartan supremacy, opposing armies marched against each other in a line formation, twelve to sixteen men deep. It was, at that time, a rule of war. Epaminondas, the Theban general, at the battle of Leuctra, breaking through this rule, strengthened his left wing to fifty men deep at the expense of the rest of his line. His left wing overwhelmed the Spartan right, took the centre in

flank, and the Spartan army was destroyed. From that day to this, sudden and unexpected concentration of force at a vital point—the enemy's attention having been attracted elsewhere by false information, demonstrations, and feints at vulnerable points—has been the method adopted by all the great leaders of history. Thus the apparent vulnerability of Napoleon's line of communication at Austerlitz, and of Wellington's at Salamanca, induced the enemy to separate his forces. Of this separation instant advantage was taken, one portion of the enemy being overwhelmed before the other could come to its assistance.

Napoleon, in the Waterloo campaign, seeking to defeat the allied armies separately, and therefore to strike with his whole available force at the decisive point, the point of junction, diverted Wellington's attention from that point by false information and feints directed at the vulnerable line of communication of the British army. He thus induced Wellington to delay his concentration, and thereby gained time for his attack on the Prussians. The sudden concentration of the allied armies on the field of Waterloo, however, came as an entire surprise to Napoleon, and hence, probably, his destruction.

The sudden and unexpected rush of 10,000 to 13,000 Athenians drove over 100,000 Persians in utter panic to their ships at Marathon. The sudden and unexpected attack of Cromwell on the Royalist right at Marston Moor assured the defeat of the

Royalists and the ultimate triumph of the Parliamentarians. The sudden and unexpected onslaught of the Japanese on the Russian right at Mukden—the attention of the Russian general having previously been drawn to his left—would probably have resulted in the utter defeat of the latter had the former possessed sufficient cavalry. It was the sudden and unexpected counterstroke of the English at Poitiers which destroyed the French army. It was Frederick the Great's unexpected onslaught which destroyed the French army at Rossbach. It was Nelson's unexpected hardihood at Aboukir Bay which placed the French fleet at his mercy—and the same is true of Copenhagen.

As a notable example of the misapplication of an overwhelmingly powerful force we may mention the Spanish Armada. Philip II of Spain tied the hands of his admiral, ordering him to hug the French coast and to avoid an engagement until he had formed a junction with Parma in the harbours of the Netherlands. The Spanish admiral, arriving at the entrance of the English Channel, found that the English were unaware of his approach, that their fleet was scattered in the Channel ports, and that he was given an opportunity to destroy that portion of it which was in Plymouth Sound. He decided—probably on the recommendation of his subordinates—to attack and destroy the English detachment in Plymouth. But, on approaching Plymouth, he found that the English, having been

warned, were coming out to meet him. His master's orders now recurred to his recollection, and he turned and made for the French coast, seeking to avoid an engagement. For seven days the Spanish fleet, constantly attacked and harried, but refusing to fight, progressed up-channel towards the point of concentration. Its rearmost ships—the slowest sailers—bore the brunt of the whole force of the English and Dutch, who received constant reinforcements from every English port. On arrival at the Downs, the Spaniards had suffered heavily, without having inflicted any punishment on their enemies. They were demoralised; their enemies proportionately elated. A sudden night attack by fireships completed their discomfiture; and at dawn, scattered and helpless in face of their enemy, they were driven past the point of concentration into the North Sea.

There seems no reason to doubt that if Medina-Sidonia had carried out his first plan and attacked with his whole force the English detachment as it issued from Plymouth, that he would have destroyed the English and Dutch fleets piecemeal, and enabled Parma to effect the invasion and easy conquest of England. But no military spirit can withstand constant belabouring without an attempt to return the blows.

This principle of success applies equally to strategy. Napoleon's combination which resulted in Trafalgar would almost certainly have succeeded had he possessed in Villeneuve a leader of high capacity. His

marches to Marengo, to Jena, and to Ulm are illustrations of this principle. Wellington's passage of the Douro, his construction of the lines of Torres Vedras, his unexpected assaults on the fortresses of Badajos and Ciudad Rodrigo, his converging attacks at Vittoria, similarly illustrate this principle. Hannibal's unexpected offensive from Spain into Italy, the sudden attack on the Russian fleet in Port Arthur, the seizure of Seoul, and the passage of the Yalu by the Japanese—these merely illustrate the same lesson, and prove that sudden and unexpected concentration of force has been the feature of the operations of all great leaders since time immemorial.

Surprise is the essence of success ; for it is not only calculated to upset the mental equilibrium of the hostile commander, but to temporarily destroy discipline and to dislocate all organisation, that is, to reduce an armed force to an armed mob. But if the opponent learns of the projected concentration, he will naturally take steps to meet it, or to inflict a crushing counterstroke elsewhere. Surprise depends on secrecy in preparation and rapidity in execution. Secrecy can only be attained by the suppression of the hostile system of espionage, which requires an organisation for the purpose ; and by the strictest discipline not only in the army or navy, but in the nation at large. Rapidity in execution, that is, mobility, also depends on education, discipline, organisation, and training. And closely connected with this question of surprise is the acquirement of information respecting

the enemy's movements and intentions. The leader works, so to speak, in the dark, which is only illuminated by his own genius. He has a foundation of certain authenticated facts on which to base his calculations and form his plans ; from this foundation he infers other facts, he must divine his enemy's intentions, he acts on probabilities. The more authenticated facts that are placed at his disposal, the more rapidly and easily will he be able to make his plans and to put his designs into execution. But in order to discover the enemy's intentions and preparations, and in order to circulate false information by means of which the enemy shall be misled, an organisation for the purpose is necessary.

Hence it is that all great leaders of history have sought to inculcate the martial qualities and to organise in peace time, or as soon as possible after the outbreak of hostilities. Philip of Macedon, learning from Epaminondas, organised and trained the Macedonian phalanx, by means of which he conquered Greece ; his son, Alexander the Great, with the same weapon, conquered the whole known world. Hamilcar, the Carthaginian general, established a base of operations in Spain and organised and trained an army ; with this weapon, and from this base, his son Hannibal struck at Rome. Gustavus Adolphus and Frederick the Great both found organised and trained armies ready to their hand ; their victories were due to forethought and preparation as much as to their masterly leadership. For the point is, that,

without their preparation, their masterly leadership would have been impossible. Both of these two leaders, like all others, depended on the manœuvring capacity of their troops. Thus Frederick the Great manœuvred on the battlefield, and threw his whole weight against the weakest point of his adversary. Gustavus Adolphus trained his cavalry to charge at a gallop instead of a walk, to pin their faith to the sabre instead of to the pistol ; he also organised his army in smaller units, and thus gained, not only greater mobility, but a greater number of brains to think for, to assist him, and to act on their own initiative in emergencies. He improved his artillery, and trained his gunners until they could fire two shots to the enemy's one. He trained his troops to combined action, placing small bodies of infantry amongst his cavalry, in order that if his cavalry met with defeat they should find a sure support and rallying-point behind these infantry squares. Nelson's victories were in great part due to the state of extraordinary efficiency into which Sir John Jervis had brought the British navy, though the instruction he, himself, imparted to his captains may well have been the primary cause.

Cromwell, Marlborough, William of Orange, Wellington, Napoleon, Jervis, Nelson, Lee, Jackson, Grant, and Sherman were obliged by stress of circumstances to train their armies and navies in time of war ; but can any man doubt that they would have preferred to train them in peace time if it had been possible ?

We may safely assert that all great leaders of history have fully recognised that the application of overpowering force at a vital point of the enemy is the one true principle of success on the battlefield or in the theatre of hostilities, and that they have, one and all, sought to put it into effect. When possible, they have endeavoured to prepare the force in peace time, and have left no stone unturned to inculcate the martial qualities, to rouse the enthusiasm and military spirit of their men, to give them confidence and to increase their own prestige. It is, probably, with a view to this latter point that the great leaders have so often claimed the protection of the Almighty, so often assured their men that in case of death on the battlefield they will win eternal happiness. The enthusiastic Maid of Orleans, claiming to be the *protégée* of Heaven, and infusing her own spirit into her countrymen, worked on the superstition of the English, and struck a shrewd blow at the military spirit of her enemies. Alexander the Great undertook an expedition into the Libyan Desert in order to oblige the priests of Ammon to recognise, and proclaim, him to be the son of Zeus and the predestined ruler of the world. It is undoubtedly with a view to enhancing their prestige and thereby strengthening their position that kings have claimed a "divine right" to rule. It was probably with this object in view that the Mahdi claimed to be the appointed of the Prophet; and it is quite possible that Cromwell, in his innermost soul, recognised the

material advantages to be gained if his men could be induced to believe that he was fighting the battles of heaven. There is no reason to stigmatise these leaders as hypocrites, for in all probability they themselves firmly believed in that divine protection they claimed. Napoleon was a firm believer in his "star," and it is a well-known trait of human nature that the man who seeks to teach must first convince himself of the truth of his teaching.

All soldiers and sailors of to-day—some unconsciously, perhaps—recognise the truth of the principle of success in war—the application of overpowering force at a vital point ; for are not all our efforts directed to the inculcation of the martial qualities into our subordinates, and to the study of the means whereby force is to be applied, either on the battlefield, or in the theatre of hostilities ? The selection and fortification of positions and "zones of manœuvre" by means of which the enemy shall be placed at a disadvantage, the sudden and unexpected counterstroke, the combined action of the three arms, the concentration of fire—what are these but the application of force ? Modern nations, with some few exceptions, have, moreover, formed themselves into machines of war, pure and simple. They not only train their leaders, but ensure that the weapons with which those leaders must fight shall be as efficient and perfect as care and forethought can make them.

Bearing this last well-known fact in mind, let us ask

ourselves, does this principle apply equally to the success of nations in the struggle for existence? Is there such a thing as national strategy, that is, the application of the national force? Are nations forces which are liable to destruction if their strength, moral or physical, be insufficient, that is, if the leadership be unscientific, or if the people lack education and the martial qualities?

There is a well-known maxim—offence is the only safe defence—which has been held to be true by every great leader of history, as well as by every student of war. It has generally been limited, however, to the strategy of the theatre of hostilities, or to the tactics of the battlefield; but, nevertheless, it undoubtedly holds true of the application of force by nations. Colonel Henderson writes: "Treaties of peace are only signed within sight of an enemy's capital." And again: "A nation endures with comparative equanimity defeat beyond its own borders. Pride and prestige may suffer, but a high-spirited people will seldom be brought to the point of making terms unless its army is annihilated in the heart of its own country, unless the capital is occupied and the hideous sufferings of war are brought directly home to the mass of the population."¹

Captain Mahan writes: "And it must be added as a received military axiom that war, however defensive in moral character, must be waged aggressively if it is to hope for success." And again: "In the matter of

¹ *Stonewall Jackson.*

preparation for war, one clear idea should be absorbed first by every one who, recognising that war is still a possibility, desires to see his country ready. This idea is that, however defensive in origin or political character a war may be, the assumption of a simple defensive in war is ruin. War, once declared, must be waged offensively, aggressively. The enemy must not be fended off, but smitten down. You may then spare him every exaction, relinquish every gain ; but till down he must be struck incessantly and remorselessly.”¹

Clausewitz, on the other hand, asserts that the defensive is “the stronger form of war” ; and it is undoubtedly the case that a nation which fights in defence of its possessions, which seeks to repel aggression, displays greater unanimity of purpose, and therefore greater power. Thus the war which is defensive in its moral character is the stronger form of war, provided the initiative and the power to strike the first blow are not handed over to the enemy. It would seem, however, that the strongest form of war is that which is aggressive both in its moral character and in its conduct, provided the aggressive motive be disguised ; for aggressive designs permit of preparation on scientific principles. Such a conception of war is, however, designated as utterly unscrupulous—on a plane with the poisoning of wells, or the murder of prisoners. If, however, we can imagine a nation with criminal tendencies, we then see that

¹ *The Interest of America in Sea Power.*

such a form of war, which is of a powerful nature, and is likely to be successful, would strongly appeal to it.

But however that may be, there is a general consensus of opinion that "war must be waged aggressively, offensively." For Clausewitz himself by no means takes an opposite view, for he writes: "A war in which victories are merely used to ward off blows, and where there is no attempt to return the blow, would be just as absurd as a battle in which the most absolute defence (passivity) should everywhere prevail in all measures."

If we admit that the application of overpowering force at a vital point is the one true principle of success in war between nations, then we can understand that an offensive is essential to success; but if, on the other hand, we refuse to admit this principle, then we cannot understand the reason for the above generally accepted maxim. For the application of force at a vital point of an enemy implies a movement towards that enemy, that is, an offensive. And, vice versa, without an offensive movement, it is evidently impossible to apply overpowering force at a vital point, that is, it is impossible to put into practice the one true principle of success in war, and defeat must be the inevitable result. If we turn to history, we find that no nation which has adopted an attitude of passive defence has ever won wars, unless it has obtained the services of allies to strike for it.

Julius Cæsar, shortly before his assassination, was engaged in the study of the problem of Imperial

Defence. He decided to assume the offensive against the barbarians on the northern frontiers of the empire, taking the Parthians and Scythians to the east first, and the Germans to the west afterwards. He was killed, however, before he could put his plans into execution. Augustus Cæsar reversed his policy, or rather, strategy, and elected to stand on the passive defensive. He fortified the frontiers, and maintained armies for the defence of those frontiers. His line of strategy was, with one small interlude, followed up to the last days of the Roman Empire. The barbarians, in the course of many centuries, increased and multiplied, constantly surging against the frontiers, until finally, like a pent-up sea, they burst their barriers, flooding and swilling into every cranny and crevice of the western empire. And these were mere barbarians. How if they had been vigorous and up-to-date nations?—How much the sooner would the Roman Empire have fallen?

Henry IV and Richelieu both considered that an offensive against the House of Hapsburg was the sole means by which the independence of France could be assured. Richelieu deliberately formed a plan of campaign which was systematically followed, and which left France almost supreme in Europe. His plan was to suppress all discord and dissension in France, that is, to destroy the power of the nobility and of the Huguenots, and to make the king supreme; to weaken the House of Hapsburg to the utmost by intrigue or fraud, as well as by utilising the North

German Protestants and Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden ; and finally, when France was ready, to strike a death-blow. It was only towards the latter end of the Thirty Years War that France struck in with decisive effect, and ensured her own ascendancy by leaving Germany a prey to hopeless discord and disunion. Louis XIV afterwards carried on his national strategy on similar principles, and, making his preparations, deliberately attempted to seize the Netherlands. His failure was due to the fact that, at the very moment when he had the Netherlands at his feet, he failed to move rapidly and to strike the decisive blow ; he granted his enemies time ; a coalition was formed against him ; and he was, finally, obliged to relinquish the offensive and to defend himself.

Gustavus Adolphus recognised that a defensive attitude against the House of Hapsburg must prove fatal to the independence of Sweden. He therefore made preparation and assumed the offensive into Germany. Frederick the Great, when confronted by an alliance between Austria, Prussia, and France, did not hesitate, but instantly assumed the offensive. That certain modern nations will, if necessary, act as did Cyrus the Persian and Frederick the Great seems evident from the late Morocco question between Germany and France. There are two possible explanations of this affair. The first, that Germany sought occasion to strike down France while Russia, the ally of the latter, was helpless ; and was only restrained by the warning that Great Britain would

assist France. And the second explanation is that Germany, in doubt whether the *entente cordiale* was an alliance directed against herself, sought to ascertain the truth by a threat against France, with a view to the delivery of an actual blow before Great Britain was ready, if there was found to be just cause for apprehension. The latter is the most charitable explanation; the former is probably the true one. But whichever of these is correct, the underlying principle is the same. For the policy which consists in striking down one adversary before another probable adversary can be fully prepared is identical with the operation, so well known in strategy, which utilises the interior lines of operation; the essence of both is time.—Can one hostile force be destroyed before another can come to its assistance?

There are throughout history numerous instances of war, aggressive in moral character and conducted offensively, which have been eminently successful. The Protestant prince, Prince Maurice of Saxe, while secretly preparing for hostilities, pretended the utmost friendship for his old master and chief, Charles V, Emperor of Germany; he then suddenly threw off the mask, and by a rapid advance nearly succeeded in seizing the person of the emperor. Protestants will, however, maintain that his action was defensive in moral character; but Catholics, on the other hand, will maintain that it was aggressive. As to the deceitful nature of his proceedings there can be no doubt.

Frederick the Great of Prussia, having made his preparations with extreme secrecy, deliberately took advantage of the death of the emperor, and of the weakness of Austria owing to the accession of a princess, and seized Silesia. The attack by the Prussians and Austrians on the Danes was distinctly aggressive in its moral character. The Prussians, having made preparation, attacked Austria in 1866, throwing the onus on to their enemy. Their war against France in 1870 was conducted on similar principles ; Prussia, or the present German Empire, may, in fact, be termed the exponent of war, aggressive in its moral character, conducted offensively, and crowned with complete success. Lately published memoirs and biographies give no reason to believe that its future wars will be conducted by methods less promising, if less unscrupulous, than those by means of which it has won the leading place in the continent of Europe. As is well known, their conception of war, and the methods by which victory may be won, are based on the writings of Clausewitz ; it seems possible that some final chapters of his great work on war are in existence which have, nevertheless, never been published.

The Boers give us another example of a morally aggressive war in which the onus was thrown on to the enemy ; it failed owing to the military inefficiency of the nation.

In the mediæval wars between England and France the English sought to break down the French power

by the invasion of French territory, the destruction of the French forces, and the conquest of the country. Their action was, without doubt, morally aggressive. In the wars between these two nations, in the time of Louis XIV, England resisted the aggressive designs of the French on the Netherlands, in the conviction that a French domination of the Dutch harbours must constitute a serious menace to the British power. Her action was consequently defensive in moral character. As her possessions increased, and her empire became extended, her wars became more defensive in moral character ; the French seized the initiative and became morally aggressive. In the war of American independence, France, having made careful preparation, struck in at the opportune moment, and Great Britain was brought to the verge of destruction. It is possible that she owed her ultimate escape to the French Revolution, which not only reduced France to anarchy, but ruined the power of the French navy.

Napoleon's wars were, in the first instance, aggressive in moral character ; afterwards they became defensive—the only means by which he could maintain his position. He defended himself by offensive strokes, seeking to separate and destroy his adversaries in turn. When, through lack of resources—after his great disaster in Russia—he failed to maintain his offensive attitude, he succumbed to the attack of the continental powers.

The late war between Russia and Japan affords an interesting study in this connexion. It seems probable

that the war was morally aggressive on the part of both combatants. Japan was, however, the first to be in readiness ; she seized the initiative, and sought to win success by a bold offensive, the destruction of the Russian armies, and the capture of those arsenals which constituted a threat to Japan.

There appears to be some evidence which tends to show that nations which have much to gain by war act on the morally offensive, and that those which have everything to lose, like Great Britain in 1778, or in the present day, on the morally defensive.

It will be seen that national policy, or national leadership, is of primary importance. Clausewitz, who terms it "State policy," lays great stress on it, and points out how that a false line of policy injuriously affects all the after-military operations. Captain Mahan also writes : "When a general line of policy, whether military or political, is correctly chosen upon sound principles, incidental misfortunes or disappointments do not frustrate the conception." Mr. Spenser Wilkinson has continually urged the importance of national policy for many years past. The name which may be given to this science of national leadership is obviously immaterial, provided it be recognised that, fundamentally, it is identically the same science as strategy.¹

The preparation and application of the national

¹ The author himself has, in a previous book, termed it "Peace Strategy," which is, however, an undoubted misnomer, for it by no means comes to a conclusion at the outbreak of hostilities.

force is the province of national leadership ; while the principle of success—the application of overpowering force at a vital point of the enemy—is the same as in strategy. The manner in which this principle is put into effect is also immaterial, provided it be successfully accomplished ; and a failure to accomplish it will probably result in defeat, and will lead to downfall in the struggle for national existence. This conception of war may be very horrible, but defeat in war and collapse in the struggle for national existence are far more horrible. So long as unscrupulous nations exist in this world, righteous and peaceful nations would do well to face what appears to be the true conception of war ; for there is no police force to keep in check nations with criminal tendencies. The modern nation of criminal tendencies, if such exist, is, to-day, far more dangerous to the peaceful and righteous nation than was its prototype in mediæval and ancient times ; for it applies greater science to its national problems. It was by preparation of their force, and by the application of their whole available force at the decisive point, at the decisive moment, that the Japanese have raised themselves into the front rank of nations, and incidentally won an increase of comfort for their people. It was by a similar adherence to this principle of success that the Prussian kingdom managed to exist, and finally developed into the present German Empire. It is by adherence to this principle, the first and last law of leadership, that these two nations will gain

their ultimate ambition, whether that ambition be legitimate or the reverse. Can these great peoples be termed nations of criminal tendencies? Are they one particle worse than others? Is there really such a thing, when vital interests are concerned, as national morality outside the copy-book or political oratory? Is honesty the best policy when there exists no law—and no police force to uphold it, even if it existed—under which the dishonest can be punished?

Most of the nations which have gone down before their enemies in war, and which have failed in the struggle to exist, have suffered, owing to unscientific leadership, to a lack of vigilance, to the disregard of national strategy, and of the principle of success. As notable examples, we may mention the Athenians, the Lombards, the Turks, and the Poles. In each of these cases the bad national leadership quickly resulted in loss of the martial qualities, in discord and lack of unity of purpose, that is, in the diminution, or even disappearance of the national force, both moral and physical. Such a nation cannot assume the offensive, and cannot therefore put into effect the principle of war; for the offensive demands a far higher display of the martial qualities than the passive defensive. How often do we hear of troops which are fit only to fight behind entrenchments? An ill-trained army will seldom dare, except in overwhelming numbers, to assume the offensive against one which is well trained. And the same undoubtedly holds true of nations.

It appears to be the case that national force is made up of the same components as that force which, as we have seen, is successful on the battlefield. First and foremost, the moral qualities, scientific national leadership, education, unity of purpose, patriotism, or the spirit of self-sacrifice, enthusiasm¹—those virtues which are known in an armed force as the “military spirit”; and secondly, the physical qualities, discipline, organisation, training, numbers, and armament. We find that all nations, without exception which have won renown, comfort, and a great position, have displayed most of these qualities in a marked degree; while those that failed to achieve greatness, lacked them. We are therefore justified, perhaps, in the inference that these are national, as they are military virtues, the essentials of success both in peace and war; that a nation, like an army or navy, which lacks any one of these, is liable to destruction; but that a nation which lacks them all, or most of them, is doomed, if, or rather when, it meets an efficient opponent in the struggle to exist.

We also find that the successful nations of the past have almost invariably been organised with a view to war. And again, we find that the great nations of the past tested every form of national leadership, from mob-rule to military autocracy and despotism—except one, the system of scientifically trained leaders.

¹ Religious enthusiasm, combined with patriotism, which teaches that men who die for their country and comrades will win eternal happiness hereafter, is clearly the most effective form.

Diocletian's system of training a successor was, however, a step in that direction ; but his project was never firmly established, and broke down soon after his death. All the systems—or rather lack of system—failed at one period or another ; either the autocrat was an imbecile, or his brutality and extortions led to revolution and the loss of unity of purpose in the nation ; or the democracy developed into a demagogue-ridden mob. It was only when the nation found itself under the hand of a genius that it was uniformly successful in every undertaking. When, as time passed, nations lost their virile qualities, bad leadership, which more than once in the time of their prime had brought them to the brink of ruin, proved disastrous. We find, on the other hand, the effete nation, which appeared to be doomed, suddenly resuscitated and brought back to full vigour by the strong hand of the genius. If we turn to modern days, we see that the events of the last few years in the Far East merely serve to prove the teachings of history ; for it is a matter of common knowledge that it was the display of the above martial virtues, combined with methodical preparation and scientific leadership, which has enabled the Japanese, in spite of their limited resources, to triumph over the vast might of the Russian Empire.

It is evidently quite impossible to calculate with any approach to exactitude the different values of leadership and education and the various martial qualities, for each one of these is interdependent on the other.

Yet, if we bear in mind Napoleon's maxim that moral force is to physical as three is to one, and Colonel Henderson's exposition that moral force is in reality the genius of the leader, we may be able to form a very rough and approximate conception of the comparative values of the various military virtues. It is an important point, inasmuch as it is generally stated and believed in Great Britain that proficiency in rifle-shooting constitutes three parts, if not the whole, of military efficiency.

If moral force is to physical force as three is to one, and if this moral force is really the application of force in the theatre of war and on the battlefield—strategy and tactics—then leadership and education is seventy-five per cent of military efficiency, while physical force—discipline, organisation, training, armament, numbers—is about twenty-five per cent. Rifle-shooting is but one branch of training, practically of equal value to the power of marching, of keeping awake when one wishes to sleep, of acting in mass, of individual intelligence, of judging distance, of signalling, of control of the nerves, and numerous others. The best rifle-shot in the world is worthless when he has lost control of his nerves, or if he cannot judge distance, or if he cannot march to the place where his rifle-shooting will be of value, or if he lacks the intelligence to know when to shoot. Thus though rifle-shooting and confidence in his weapon are of great importance to the private soldier, yet they are certainly of no greater value than the habit of implicit obedience and con-

fidence in the leaders. It is merely a part, and a very small part, of physical force. It is to training and education in leadership from the general down to the group leader, that the first attention should be given, for with good leadership all things are possible ; with bad, nothing is possible. The victories of Crecy and Poitiers were due far more to able leadership, and to the military spirit of the English troops and nation as a whole, than to the accuracy of aim of the English archers.

If we would seek to gauge the chances of success of an army or a navy about to engage an enemy, we would seek to compare, firstly, the supreme leadership of the opposing forces and the education of the commissioned and non-commissioned ranks ; and afterwards we would turn to a comparison of the martial qualities, and, lastly, to the numbers and armament. Is it an exaggeration to assert that we can similarly judge of the chances of success in war held by two nations about to engage in a life-and-death struggle ?

But we must not forget that nations maintain armed forces to guard their vital points, and that before one of these can be reached, these armed forces must be destroyed. In every achievement certain well-defined and preliminary steps must be taken before the final end can be attained ; and the secret of success lies in thinking out beforehand, and making the necessary preparation, for each step in advance. It is thus the case that, in a comparison of the available force of two nations about to engage in war, the

size and strength of the armed forces which they maintain, the vital and vulnerable points of the nations, as well as the leadership and the martial qualities of the whole, must be considered. The problem of the national security must be discussed, and, finally, the capacity of the nation to put into effect the principle of success in war examined.

And such a comparison is an essential foundation on which to base the study of the problem of national defence; for without it, it is impossible to arrive at a just conclusion as to the measures which must be adopted if the national security would be safeguarded.

CHAPTER III

THE PROBLEM OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY

Fatal to base calculations on false assumptions—Possible enemies of Great Britain—Comparison of foreign problems of national security with that of Great Britain—Value of naval offensive—Subsidies—Oversea garrisons—Prospect of obtaining allies.

IN the attempt to deal with any military problem it is, needless to say, fatal to base calculations on a false assumption ; and more especially is this so in one of such magnitude and importance as that of national defence. We read in that great Book on War, the Bible, of a certain people who, believing that the Gods were hostile, that their territories lay above the sky which, moreover, they apparently believed to be a vast canopy stretched over the earth, determined, with perfectly wise strategy, to strike a decisive blow at the vital point and to invade the hostile territory. They therefore commenced their Tower of Babel as a means whereby they might reach their enemy. But, unfortunately, as we now know, their calculations were based on a misapprehension ; the sky was not a canopy ; the Gods were not ensconced behind it ; their efforts were consequently misdirected and foredoomed to failure. The inevitable babel of tongues ensued.

Is it not the case that we, at the present day, in our

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consideration of the problem of national defence, base our calculations on the comfortable but doubtful assumption that we shall obtain one or more allies, that we shall cunningly await the moment when our allies and the enemy, having torn themselves to pieces, are exhausted, and that we shall then smilingly intervene, compose the quarrel, read the combatants a little lecture on their intemperate and criminal behaviour, and, incidentally, take everything worth taking throughout the world? Is it not, however, wise to remember that he who assumes on insufficient grounds that his enemy is a simpleton, affords strong presumptive evidence that he himself is one? We seem to forget that nations do not go to war from motives of philanthropy, and that a modern nation will only fight as our ally if confident that it will receive such assistance as will enable it to assume the offensive and cast the burden of war on the adversary.

Let us endeavour to examine this problem in a scientific spirit; to ascertain which are the possible enemies of Great Britain; to compare the military problems they are called on to solve with those of Great Britain; and, bearing in mind the principle of success in war, to judge of the manner in which they will seek to solve their problems.

The powers which exist in the world with any pretensions to rival Great Britain in strength and resources can be enumerated. These are the United States, Germany, France, Italy, and possibly Turkey and Japan. In addition to these there is the vast

Russian Empire, which, though its fleets have lately been destroyed and the nation as a whole reduced to impotence by defeat in war and revolution, may yet, very possibly, again build up its power on land and sea in the near future. Though at present the Russian Empire appears to be helpless for good or evil, yet we cannot afford to disregard that nation in a consideration of our problem ; and more especially is this the case when we remember that military despotism and foreign aggression often follow hard on the heels of revolution, that future Russian aggression may well take the direction of India or the Persian Gulf, and that the geographical position of Russia renders her a peculiarly valuable ally to any naval power which may be hostile to Great Britain.

In addition to these again there are the Afghans, the hill tribes on the north-west frontier of India, the Abyssinians, and the Boers, all of whom are either posted on the frontiers of British possessions or of territories in the occupation of the British, or form part, against their will, of the British Empire.

We have seen that there is good reason to suppose that war is due either to vital national necessity, that is, to the struggle to exist, or to ambition. It is difficult to state what may be the urgent national requirements of other nations ; these can only be inferred from their actions, for a nation which intends to gain its object at the expense of another nation

will naturally—holding in view the principle of success—seek to maintain secrecy until such time as it is prepared to enforce its demands by war. And still more difficult is it for us to state the possible ambitions of other nations. As regards Russia, for example, the possession of an ice-free port has apparently, up to the present, been regarded by Russians as a vital national necessity, while by Englishmen it is generally regarded as a piece of unwarrantable ambition. Whichever view is the correct one, the fact remains that the Russians have on several occasions in the past faced war in order to gain their object, and we may safely assume that, if they win through the present crisis which threatens the national existence, they will again face the prospect of war in order to gain their object, whether it be legitimate or the reverse. If, in the future, the Russians still seek to effect their ends, history seems to tell us that they will probably move in the line of least resistance, that is, towards China—if the present movement of regeneration in that country fails—the Persian Gulf, or India. In the two last of these directions a Russian advance will directly threaten vital British interests, and will infallibly be a cause of war. We are therefore justified in the assertion that war between Great Britain and the Russian Empire is, in the near if not in the immediate future, by no means beyond the bounds of possibility.

The United States and France at the present time display considerable friendliness for Great Britain,

but it is not so many years since the reverse was the case, and we must recognise—for it is a fatal error in all matters connected with war or national defence to refuse to face fearlessly unpleasant facts or possibilities—that friendliness may, on some slight motive, be converted to hate just as rapidly as hate was converted to friendship. It is almost inconceivable to us at this present time that the circumstances can arise in which Great Britain will find herself at war either with France or with the United States. “It takes two to fight” is an old proverb which is both true and untrue of nations; for if a nation desires to impose its will on another, and finds that that other refuses to fight, so much the more easy will be the accomplishment of its purpose. The peaceful nation will find no policeman to whom to appeal. Canada and Newfoundland are both sources of possible friction between Great Britain and the United States, while Great Britain will find it difficult to avoid participation in any struggle which may possibly occur between the United States and Japan. It certainly cannot be asserted that war between Great Britain and the United States is impossible.

War between Great Britain and Germany in the near future is not only not impossible, but—so some maintain—inevitable. It has been calculated that the Germans will be ready in 1920. If, when that time comes, France is not allied to Great Britain, she will probably be an enemy.

It is, however, difficult to conceive any possible

cause of war which could, at present or in the near future, arise between Great Britain and either Italy or Japan. It is, on the other hand, true that Italy may be coerced by a hostile coalition; and that friction between Japan and the United States may arouse hostility between the former country and Great Britain.

We have, so far as can be seen, no justification for the assumption that the Boers are content with the present regime, while signs are not wanting to show that the racial hatred between Briton and Boer, far from dying out, is as pronounced as ever it was. If the Boers throughout South Africa again make an attempt to cast off British supremacy, Great Britain will perforce be drawn into the struggle, unless she elects to abandon the English inhabitants of Natal to the tender mercies of their enemies. The question must also be asked whether the Turks, or, for that matter, the Egyptians themselves, have entirely acquiesced in the British supremacy in Egypt? Will not they, as well as the Boers, seek an opportunity to recover their territories or their independence? Will not any hostile nation endeavour to utilise them as weapons against Great Britain? And the Afghans and hill tribes on the north-west frontier of India—What action will these take in the event of war between Great Britain and Russia? Is it perfectly certain that they will stand aloof? Is it not rather perfectly certain that they will join that nation which wins the first successes, or which gives reason for the inference that it will emerge the ultimate victor?

It will not, in any case, be denied that war, if not probable, is at least possible between Great Britain and any one, or more, of the above powers. We may, indeed, assert without fear of contradiction by any man with the smallest knowledge either of the science of war or of history that, in the absence of an earthly controlling power supported by a police force, every nation of the world must at all times face the possibility, if not the probability, of war, not only against its immediate neighbours, but even against the more remote nations, with whom commercial or other interests may become a source of friction. More than ever must this assertion prove true in the case of a world-wide empire, such as the British ; and Great Britain must be prepared to wage war against any nation, whether civilised or uncivilised, or any combination of nations, which may threaten her oversea possessions or her vital commercial interests.

It is commonly argued in Great Britain that the problem of the national security is totally dissimilar to that with which other nations are called on to deal ; and that, such being the case, the solution of the problem calls for different methods. It is evidently desirable that we should, in the first instance, clearly grasp the elements of this problem and compare it with those of other nations.

As we have seen, the nations of the past have all been obliged to face and solve a problem of the national security. Those that have been successful have all sought the solution by the destruction of the

adversary. Thus the various states of Greece, after the downfall of the Athenian Empire, were in a condition of constant discord and war with one another—a condition which was primarily the result of Persian intrigue—until, with the rise of the Macedonian power, the Persians were destroyed. The Spartans, opposed to a power which believed itself invulnerable to attack, could not ensure their own security until they had destroyed their enemy. The Romans considered that their national security could only be assured by the destruction of Carthage. The Prussians in 1866 recognised that the security of Prussia demanded the impotence of Austria; and in 1870 and 1875, that the consolidation and security of the German Empire required the destruction of the French.

Is there any reason to suppose that modern nations have entirely changed their views on this matter, and that they intend to assure their national security by any means other than that of the destruction of the adversary or his reduction to complete powerlessness?

The problem before Germany would seem to be as follows:—

1. The defence of her home territory—which object she will seek to gain by the final destruction of a threatening power. The attainment of this object involves the annihilation of the hostile armed forces, the capture of his arsenals, the exhaustion of his wealth and resources.

2. The defence of her oversea possessions—which end she will seek to accomplish by the same methods. If the adversary be an island power, she will, in the first instance, endeavour to gain control of the sea with a view to the delivery of a decisive blow on land.

And, in addition, there is the peace problem.

3. The maintenance of garrisons in her oversea possessions the home of subject races.

The problem before France is identical with that before Germany, with the modification that she holds larger oversea possessions.

The problem before Japan, prior to her war with Russia, was identical with that before Germany and France, except that, being an island power, she was obliged to gain command of the sea in the first instance with a view to the delivery of the decisive blow on land. Notwithstanding her conquest of Manchuria and Corea, Japan's military problem remains unchanged, with the exception that she now holds larger oversea possessions, the home of subject races, that these possessions must be garrisoned, and that they render her a continental as well as an island power.

It will thus be seen that the only fundamental difference which exists between any of the above problems are due to two causes :—

1. The fact that a nation is an island power.
2. The extent of the oversea possessions, and the type of the subject races—whether martial or other-

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wise—on which factors depend the strength of the required garrisons.

The principle which underlies all these national problems is identical, the destruction of the adversary. If the combatants are “in touch” on land, they strike directly at each other ; if separated by the sea, they contest the command of the sea as a preliminary to a blow on land.

It may be argued that the problem before Switzerland forms an exception to the above ; and as the organisation of the Swiss has constantly been held up as a model which Englishmen should copy, it is desirable to touch on it. The Swiss are a small and comparatively weak nation, their neutrality guaranteed by their powerful neighbours—not in the interests of the Swiss, but from motives of jealousy. Switzerland in the possession of one of the great military nations of the Continent would afford a strong position, a bastion, so to speak, from which the territories of the neighbours could be overlooked and their defensive fortifications outflanked, and from which an offensive in any direction would be facilitated. None of the powers of western and central Europe can afford to see Switzerland in the possession of a powerful rival. The Swiss can rest confident that if any power attempts to occupy her territory she will at once be assisted by at least three allies. The Swiss people very wisely seek to render this guarantee as effective as possible, on the principle that “Heaven helps those who help themselves.” They will, doubt-

less, strike, and strike hard, in self-defence; but offensive operations with a view to the destruction of a possible adversary must, in consideration of their weakness, be discarded except in alliance with one or more of the other great powers. It must, nevertheless, not be forgotten that it was the Swiss who, in the Middle Ages, destroyed the great and threatening power of Burgundy; and that when menaced by Austria in olden times, they so ravaged the fields of Germany that the great Emperor was constrained to make peace. It was only when, in the wars of the French Revolution, they relied too much on their mountain fastnesses, and on the sympathetic utterances of the French revolutionaries, and too little on the training of their men, that their rich valleys formed the battle-ground of contending nations.

Great Britain is not, at present, in the position of Switzerland; she controls a vast empire, portions of which are coveted by almost every great nation of the world; she wishes to avoid the loss of her empire and a state of dependency on her neighbours. It is not that a nation may not be perfectly happy in a state of dependence so long as it is not utilised as a battlefield—which usually occurs—but that the process of falling from the first rank of nations is terrible.

It appears to be true of island powers, as of continental, that success on the sea will by no means obviate the necessity for a decisive blow on land. A

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nation must either deliver this blow herself, induce other nations to strike for her, or operate on the passive defensive.

It is true that Japan did not strike a direct blow at a vital point of the Russian Empire, and, nevertheless, won victory and gained her objects. But the attempted revolution in Russia has threatened the very existence of that nation, and was, it can hardly be denied, a principal cause of its surrender. This revolution was undoubtedly the immediate outcome of the Russian defeats ; but were there, then, no Japanese emissaries at work in Russia ? It is almost inconceivable that a scientific general staff, such as that of the Japanese, would prove indifferent to the opportunity offered by the state of perpetual unrest in Russia.

In any case, the Japanese struck indirectly at the heart of the Russian nation ; for every operation was, it is evident, calculated with a view not only to the destruction of the Russian forces, but to the effect it would have on the internal situation in Russia itself. And, moreover, it must not be forgotten that the struggle is not yet necessarily terminated. The Japanese have gained a strong strategical position on the mainland—unless they evacuate Manchuria—which may, in the future, be used as a base of operations for a more deadly blow. Or, it may be, that, having failed to press their advantage to the uttermost, they may yet again, in the future, be called upon to fight for very existence. It is, in any case, beyond

doubt that, if the Japanese had failed to assume the offensive on land, and had remained content with their success on the sea, they would, by this time, have been reduced to extremity. For there are no great Russian colonies in the Pacific which, having been conquered by Japan, would have given her fresh sources of wealth with which to stand the strain of another war a few years hence.

But it will at once be pointed out that Captain Mahan, in his great works on the influence of sea power on war, has demonstrated that a naval offensive is calculated to reduce a hostile power to impotence. It is an important point; for on it depends the capacity of an island state without an army to bring a war against a continental nation to a successful termination. Let us therefore study the question, and seek to arrive at some definite conclusion.

Captain Mahan, writing of the French Revolutionary wars, speaks of "the directly offensive use of Great Britain's maritime power," which, he continues, "consisted in throwing back France upon herself, while at the same time cutting off her resources." He points out that the continental opponents of France were supported by British subsidies, or by the co-operation of British fleets, whose influence in the land operations was, on occasions, of marked value. The British sea power brought colonial expansion and a vast increase in commerce and wealth in its train, which enabled Great Britain to find the money for the subsidies. The resources of France were, on the

other hand, cut off on land by the continental powers, on sea by the British.

By 1797 the agricultural, manufacturing, and industrial power of France had become almost extinct. Captain Mahan tells us that "so severe was the suffering and poverty caused by this isolation, that in the moment of his greatest triumph, immediately after signing the peace of Campo Formio, which left Great Britain without an ally in October, 1797, Bonaparte wrote: 'Either our government must destroy the English monarchy, or must expect to be itself destroyed by the corruption and intrigue of these active islanders. Let us concentrate all our activity upon the navy and destroy England.'"

It seems evident, not only from these short extracts, but from the whole tenor of Captain Mahan's teaching, that he considers that a direct offensive, calculated to force a continental nation to its knees, lies within the capacity of a navy which is supreme on the sea. His contentions receive support from the state of France towards the end of the reign of Louis XIV. The terrible pictures, which have been presented to us by French historians, of the miseries and privations suffered by the French people, form an eloquent testimony to the value of sea power. But it is noticeable that in both these instances France had been engaged in a life-and-death struggle for many years, that she had fought not only on the sea, but on land, and that the bulk of her best men had for a long time been withdrawn from in-

dustrial pursuits. It was not only her sea frontiers, moreover, which had been blockaded, but her land frontiers ; it was not only her oversea but her over-land resources which had been cut off.

Though Captain Mahan is the greatest authority and exponent of the value of sea power that the world has ever seen, yet this point is one of such vital importance to Great Britain that we may perhaps be pardoned if we venture to express grave doubts as to the entire justice of his conclusions.¹

To throw back an enemy upon himself surely implies a defensive attitude with counter-attacks, and an offensive attitude on the part of the hostile power which is so thrown back. But counter-attacks which merely throw the enemy back upon himself are valuable only in that they gain time ; it is the crushing counterstroke, which not only forces the enemy back into his own ground, but which follows him up, pressing him down with blow upon blow, driving through all opposition, that wins victory on the battlefield. Does not this well-known maxim apply equally to the struggles between nations ? Can a crushing counter-

¹ The writer fully recognises his almost unpardonable presumption in thus entering the lists against so great an authority as Captain Mahan. Captain Mahan's conclusions, however, if they have been rightly stated by the present writer, involve a principle of vast national import. If it be a false principle, its enunciation, without challenge, by so great an authority as Captain Mahan, may well have a disastrous effect on the fate of our country. It is possible, therefore, that a soldier who ventures to treat of it may be forgiven, and his earnestness pleaded in excuse for his temerity.

stroke be executed by a navy which cannot follow the enemy into his own territory, but which can merely blockade his sea frontiers, cut off his oversea resources, and indirectly support land operations?

Let us glance through the wars between Great Britain and continental powers in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, discarding all detail which is so apt to confuse the main issue, and seek an answer to this question.

In 1651, war, which was in reality a struggle for commerce and therefore for the control of the sea, broke out between the English and Dutch. In 1654 peace was proclaimed, the terms being greatly to the advantage of the English. But the latter had not attempted to strike a decisive blow on land; the Dutch gained time in which to recuperate; and eleven years later, in 1665, war again broke out. This war was also indecisive, but terminated in favour of the Dutch, whose fleet had entered the Thames and seized Sheerness. In 1672 the English obtained the assistance of the French, and the Dutch were attacked both by land and sea. Though successful on the sea, the Dutch were nevertheless brought to the verge of destruction by the operations on land, and were only saved by the dilatoriness of Louis XIV, who delayed to strike a fatal blow when opportunity offered. The French were thereafter thrown on the defensive by the formation of a coalition and were outmatched on land; they managed, however, by their victories to preserve themselves from invasion.

The war finally terminated owing to the exhaustion of the combatants, Great Britain alone, having been secure from invasion, emerging with undiminished power. This war was, however, more decisive than the last; for the Dutch power had been rudely shaken.

In 1688 war again broke out between France and a coalition. England, now fearing the further aggrandisement of France, joined the allies. The French fleet had been greatly improved during the peace, and was superior to the combined English and Dutch fleets; while the French land frontiers had been fortified. In the battle of Beachy Head, in 1690, the British and Dutch fleets were defeated; and for two years the French held control of the Channel. They utilised their advantage by invasions of Ireland; but, in view of the efforts they were called on to put forth on the Continent, where they were obliged to maintain four armies in the field, a concentrated invasion of England was, owing to lack of troops, impracticable. In 1692 the French were defeated at the sea battle of La Hogue. France was again outmatched on land, but her frontier fortresses saved her from invasion. The war, which was indecisive, finally terminated owing to the exhaustion of the combatants. The Dutch had, however, been obliged to turn their main attention to their land frontiers; and their power on the sea was diminished.

In the War of the Spanish Succession, 1702 to

1712, France, together with Spain, fought against a coalition of Holland, Germany, Great Britain, and Portugal. The French practically confined their naval operations to the destruction of commerce ; with the result that Great Britain rapidly established undisputed supremacy on the sea. France was defeated in numerous great battles on land by Marlborough and Eugene, but was saved from invasion by her fortresses. Peace was finally proclaimed, owing to the exhaustion of the combatants, and the war was again indecisive. Again undisputed supremacy on the sea proved unable to bring the war to a rapid and decisive termination. The Dutch had now, however, dropped out of the race for empire ; and the issue lay between Great Britain and France.

The War of the Austrian Succession, in which Great Britain and France took part on opposite sides, broke out in 1744 ; and was terminated indecisively, but to the advantage of Great Britain, by the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 1748. Great Britain was again supreme on the sea ; but France had been successful on the Continent.

In the Seven Years War, which commenced in 1756, Great Britain quickly established her supremacy on the sea, vastly extended her colonial empire at the expense of France, and even made descents on the French coasts. France, under the disastrous leadership of Madame de Pompadour, the favourite of Louis XV, had reversed her traditional policy and now sided with Austria against Prussia. Although

heavily defeated in the land battles of Rossbach, Crevelt, and Minden, she nevertheless was safe from invasion in that Prussia was fully engaged against the Austrians, Russians, and Swedes. France obtained the assistance of Spain against Great Britain ; but it availed her little ; and the British sea power being supreme, many Spanish colonies shared the fate of the French colonies. Finally, both France and Spain concluded a disastrous peace with Great Britain. In this case, we find that the loss of colonies, and the absence of the smallest prospect of ultimate success, sufficed to force continental powers to their knees temporarily. But it was only temporary ; the war was indecisive ; and France utilised the period of peace to reorganise and strengthen her navy with a view to a deliberate attack on Great Britain when opportunity should offer.

In 1774 the revolution of the American colonies gave France her opportunity. She had prepared assiduously to strike in when the auspicious moment should arrive. In 1778 Burgoyne with a British army was captured by the insurgents in America ; France thereupon recognised the independence of the Americans, and war recommenced. The French object was to reduce the power of Great Britain. As a means to this end, it was decided to threaten an invasion of England and thus to oblige the British to concentrate their main naval forces in home waters, and then to strike at the British colonies in America and Asia. It will be seen that the French

reversed the principle of success: they threatened the vital point and struck at vulnerable points. The outbreak of hostilities was marked by the indecisive battle of Ushant. Spain joined the French in 1779, her chief desire being the recapture of Gibraltar and Minorca, which had been taken from her in the previous war—a multiplicity of objectives which proved fatal to the allies. The Spaniards consequently laid siege to Gibraltar. A great French and Spanish naval force was massed in the Channel, while an army for the invasion of England was concentrated on the French coast. The invasion scheme, if it were really intended, and not a mere demonstration, broke down through unforeseen delays and faulty arrangements—in fact, through bad staff work. In 1780 the neutral powers—Russia, Denmark, and Holland—formed themselves into a league for the defence of the rights of neutrals, termed the “Armed Neutrality,” which was in reality directed against Great Britain. So serious was the menace that Great Britain declared war against her old ally, Holland; and an indecisive battle was fought between the British and Dutch fleets. The English fleets were everywhere outmatched; the communications between Great Britain and America interrupted; in 1781 Cornwallis with a British army surrendered to a combined force of French and colonists; and the independence of the United States was finally established. The British now concentrated all their efforts on regaining command of the sea, and in 1782 a French fleet was defeated in the

West Indies. Gibraltar, which had withstood a long siege, was also relieved. The prospect of decisive success against Great Britain had practically disappeared ; while the French apparently considered that the loss of the American colonies would ultimately reduce the British nation to impotence. The war was indecisive ; and peace resulted in 1783. This was the first and last occasion on which a continental power marked down Great Britain as her proximate adversary, made preparation, and struck at the opportune moment. We have seen how that, in spite of the faulty strategy of the allies, it was so nearly successful ; and we may justly aver that if France had concentrated her efforts on a blow at the vital point, she would have been victorious ; her unselfishness, or faulty strategy, in directly assisting the American colonies proved her ruin. If a blow at England had been struck, it must, without doubt, have resulted in the attainment of all the objects for which the allies fought.

War between Great Britain and France recommenced in 1793 after the French Revolution ; and, in the same year, the British, having been admitted into Toulon by the French royalists, practically established their superiority on the sea by the destruction of the greater portion of the French Mediterranean fleet in the harbour. From that date, the throwing back of France upon herself, and the interruption of her oversea resources, commenced ; but, nevertheless, in 1812, nineteen years later, France, notwithstanding

the extinction of her commerce, manufactures, and industries, was so full of vigour that Napoleon could undertake the invasion of Russia with nearly half a million of men.

It was not until 1814, when force was applied at a vital point of France—that is, in French home territory—that the French power collapsed. It was, perhaps, fortunate for Great Britain that the downfall of Napoleon was not delayed, for it will be remembered that, in 1812, the efforts of Great Britain to cut off the French overseas resources had resulted in war between Great Britain and the United States. It is without doubt the case that British naval power, British intrigue—or diplomacy, as we prefer to call it—and subsidies materially assisted in the downfall of France ; but is there any reason to suppose—if British diplomacy and subsidies had been unsuccessful, and, consequently, if Great Britain had failed to obtain allies—that British naval power alone would have forced France to succumb? It is true that it was the British subsidies which were dependent on British commerce, which again was dependent on British naval supremacy, which constituted the main-spring of the opposition to France, and it is thus equally true that it was just this British naval supremacy which brought Great Britain allies.

Napoleon in 1797 recognised this fact when he recommended the concentration of French energies against Great Britain ; but it must not be forgotten that deep causes of quarrel already existed between

France and the neighbouring powers, and that these causes must inevitably have resulted in war sooner or later even without the impulse given by the British subsidies. The chief value of these subsidies lay in the fact that they furnished the sinews of war to the continental powers, enabled them again to enter the arena, and thus deprived France of breathing space and of time in which to consolidate her power and make the necessary preparations against Great Britain. But is there any doubt, if, before the revolution, France had come under the master hand of Napoleon, or some system of leadership equally efficient and unscrupulous, and if Great Britain had been marked down by France as the proximate foe, that Great Britain would have succumbed and suffered the horrors of invasion? And there is yet another question that we are bound to ask ourselves: What sized subsidies will modern nations demand before they come to the assistance of Great Britain, and will Great Britain still be able to afford these subsidies?

Are we not justified in the assertion that the offensive which can be executed by a supreme navy is purely indirect, and that land forces, with which to strike a blow at a vital point, are essential if a definite decision is to be reached? In this connexion it must not be forgotten that the effort to cut off the oversea resources of an adversary—the principal, if not the only, nature of offensive operation which a supreme navy can carry out single-handed—must infallibly result in war between the blockading power and

neutrals whose commerce is injured. The command of the sea, without an army with which to strike the decisive blow, is apt to lead to dangerous complications.

It will probably be admitted that the question of oversea garrisons, though by no means to be disregarded, is of secondary importance to that of the organisation of forces with which to strike at the enemy, or with which to seize the sea communications by which alone the enemy can be reached. For the duties of a garrison of an oversea possession, the home of subject races, are exactly the same in principle as those of the garrison of a fortified place, or "pivot of manœuvre," in hostile territory. The ultimate security of a fortified place, or of a distant colony, threatened by the main force of the enemy, depends not on the action of the garrison, but on that of the mobile force which utilises it as a pivot of manœuvre. The duties of the actual garrison are :—

1. To hold in subjection the inhabitants who may prove hostile in time of emergency, and will certainly do so in time of defeat.

2. To undertake small frontier expeditions, either as punitive measures, or for the purpose of expanding the territory or influence of the dominant power.

3. To guard the frontier against any organised adversary who may threaten, and to hold him in check until the mobile or home army is in readiness to assume the offensive.

In the case of an island power, which must establish

its control of the sea before it can so much as commence the delivery of a decisive blow on land, the oversea garrison, threatened by an organised nation, may be called on to hold out against superior forces for a prolonged period. If the mobile army, the striking force, is fully prepared and in readiness to seize the initiative, and if, moreover, the strength at sea is sufficient to secure the early control of the sea, then the strength of the garrison may be reduced to a minimum—sufficient, that is, to police the country and to undertake small frontier expeditions. If, on the other hand, the mobile army is non-existent, or the strength at sea insufficient to establish the command of it, the oversea garrison must be increased to such a strength as will enable it to cope single-handed, not only with the inhabitants, but with an outside enemy. In other words, the garrison must be able to assume the offensive against the utmost force which the enemy can place in the field, or all thoughts of the successful defence of the oversea possession must be relinquished. Or, again, if the mobile army is merely unready, or the struggle for the command of the sea in doubt, the garrison must be in sufficient strength to withstand the onset of the whole available force which the adversary can bring to bear until such time as the home army has been rendered efficient and the control of the sea secured.

It is evident that a small garrison, supported by the whole potential strength of the nation, fully organised and trained, might prove to be the only efficient, and

therefore the only economical, means by which an island power could safeguard threatened oversea possessions.

It would seem that the British problem of the national security is fundamentally identical with that of the other great nations of the world, except for the facts :—

1. That she is an island power, and, as such, must turn her first attention to gaining the control of the sea as a preliminary to a blow at the enemy in his own territory.

2. That she holds larger oversea possessions than other nations.

If she cannot herself strike such a blow, and cannot obtain the services of allies to strike for her, she will be reduced to a passive defensive, with the prospect of a constant succession of indecisive wars, the ultimate outcome of which—if she is opposed to a scientifically directed and vigorous nation—will be a foregone conclusion.

As regards the problem of whether Great Britain is likely to obtain allies in future wars, we must remember that nations no longer enter upon a struggle with a powerful neighbour in a light-hearted and frivolous manner ; possible allies may be trusted to study the problem with extreme care, and to fight as our ally only if they are confident that they will, with our assistance, be able to assume the offensive and carry the war into the hostile territory. As the first step in the solution of this problem, our possible

allies will carefully compare the fighting capacity, that is, the national and military efficiency, of Great Britain with that of the possible enemy, and will decide accordingly.

And, again, we must remember that European nations, practically without exception, in view of the solution of their problems of the national security, have arranged for the employment in time of war of every able-bodied man, while Great Britain is content to employ but a trifling percentage of her available men. It seems probable, at first sight, that these European nations will exert far greater energy both in preparation for and in the prosecution of war, and that, for this reason alone, they will probably put into the field far greater force at the decisive moment. It seems, at first glance, therefore, that a nation of such a type will hesitate to ally itself with Great Britain against a powerful neighbour.

It is evidently very necessary to compare Great Britain as a machine of war with possible enemies.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIGHTING CAPACITY OF A NATION IN ARMS

Evolution of a nation in arms—Characteristics of a nation in arms—Education and training—Discipline—Organisation—Leadership—Unscrupulous nature of—Justification—Superiority of nation in arms to nation of warriors of antiquity.

MOST of the powers with which Great Britain may find herself at war, though they are by no means the equal of one another either in military efficiency or in resources, can yet, being nations in arms, be placed in the same category. But before we can attempt to gauge the national and military efficiency of a nation in arms we must seek to understand its spirit, and, with that object in view, to grasp the causes which brought it into being, and trace its gradual development from the nations of antiquity.

We have already attempted to form a conception of the first early communities of man; let us now endeavour to trace the gradual development of such a community through the stages of its progress.

We left the early community consisting of a conglomeration of families or tribes, who had combined for purposes of offence or defence, bound together by a community of interest. Some man who was celebrated for his physical prowess on the battlefield was

appointed chieftain, but he was liable to be deposed by any other who could prove himself to be the better man of the two. For not only was the community, as a whole, at constant war with its neighbours, but each family, or even each man, must be prepared to defend his life and property at a moment's notice against his neighbours. The community was thus composed of fighting men, who slept or laboured in the fields, for ever on the alert, with their weapons by their sides. Patriotism, or the spirit of self-sacrifice—for the good of the family in family feuds, or for the good of the community in time of war—was naturally the highest quality a man could display. If he failed to display it he was, doubtless, put to death without more ado as a worthless and useless creature—as witness the Swiss in the Middle Ages. The Afghans afford us an illustration of a nation of warriors, as did, a few years ago, the Abyssinians, who are now, however, a nation in arms.

But as the nation grew in wealth and power, and its fear of the neighbouring nations diminished, its social conditions became more complex, and the eternal prospect of sudden death at the hands of an irate or covetous neighbour unbearable. As a consequence the community, in its own defence, commenced to punish the murderer and robber; law and order, upheld by lynch law, were to some extent introduced, and the necessity for constant watchfulness commenced to disappear. Sooner or later there arose a great man who suppressed discord and violence with a strong

hand, and became the lawgiver. His first concern was to establish security for life and property amongst the people, to give them a "constitution," and to support the authority of the law by means of a police force. Of such a type were, it would seem, the great men of the nations of antiquity—Khammurabi, "the Great King" of Babylon, Moses, lawgiver of Israel, Lycurgus the Spartan, Solon the Athenian, Romulus, the founder of Rome, Alfred the Great of England, Charlemagne, and others.

Men must now lay aside their weapons when employed on peaceful avocations, but every man was still a warrior who must come to the place of rendezvous on pain of death when war threatened with a neighbouring community. Thus was formed a nation of warriors with a rude but fairly efficient organisation for war. Of such a type were, so far as we know, all the great nations of antiquity in their infancy, except possibly the Phœnician races.

In almost every case there sooner or later arose a great man of action, who struck down the neighbouring communities with fierce and sudden blows, either destroying them utterly, or making slaves of them and seizing their property. The Israelites, of whose history we have full accounts, give us an illustration. With the subjugation of the neighbouring nations, however, the necessity for constant readiness for war seems to have sunk into abeyance. And by degrees the powerful nation, which as a nation of warriors had triumphed over all its enemies, came to disregard

war ; it felt no fear of the neighbours ; and, so far as it was concerned, war, with the exception of some punitive expedition directed against some trembling tribe on the frontier, had ceased. There was no longer any necessity for the nation to put forth its whole strength ; a few men only were required. At first proved men of valour were chosen to go forth to war, but the flagrant injustice of such a course soon became apparent. The warriors demanded payment for their services and refused to fight without it, while rich men claimed the right to pay others to take their places in the ranks. Men ceased to regard their weapons as their most treasured possessions, and the fighting men gradually came to be regarded as a class in themselves—a class which received pay from the peaceful inhabitants to guard the national security, and to carry out such military operations as were necessary.

In a short time, as was to be expected, we find the armies composed of the dregs of the people, and, as the nation came to be more wealthy and luxurious, even these dregs would no longer fight. The nation went abroad to find warriors, to the poverty-stricken but more vigorous nations, and even to barbarians. Thus the Persian armies, which numbered millions of men, consisted principally of slaves who were whipped into action by their Persian officers, while the Roman armies, in the latter days of the Roman Empire, consisted almost entirely of barbarians. War quickly came to be disregarded by the nation as a whole ; the

use of weapons was forgotten ; the national organisation for war disappeared ; energy and vigour were replaced by luxury and extravagance, especially in the wealthy classes, and very often progress ceased. The great martial qualities, which the nation had formerly displayed in a pre-eminent degree, and by means of which it had triumphed over its neighbours, were lost. The discipline and patriotism, or unity of purpose, had gone, and had been replaced by discord arising from the conflicting interests of the various sections of the community. Where a universal training to arms was absent, it was inevitable that the national leadership in time of war should suffer. The great men of the nation no longer studied war and the methods by which victory might be won ; they sought to achieve their ends by intrigue rather than by force ; they enjoyed unbounded luxury and magnificence, and had lost that mental and physical vigour which is the very essence of the trained warrior. They thought only of their own interests, and quite disregarded the national interest. We have examples in the Babylonians, the Persians, the Romans, and, in later days, the Spaniards, the Venetians, and the Poles.

The study of war was left to the mercenary sailors and soldiers. These mercenaries themselves, fighting men though they were, could never for long retain those martial qualities which had died out in the nation at large, and without which they were helpless in the hands of a resolute foe. And it was never long before that foe arose ; a short, sharp conflict,

and the great empire collapsed before the attack of a young and vigorous nation of warriors—flocks of sheep before wolves.

We find the same lesson taught in the history of all the nations of antiquity—the disregard of war and the refusal of the people to bear arms leads inevitably to the rise of the mercenary, the disappearance of national leadership and of the martial qualities, and is the beginning of the end. Providence, or the predatory instinct, or the struggle to exist—which you will—sooner or later impels some neighbouring nation to destroy an effete and wealthy race.

Mercenaries will never fight when they can avoid it; their one object is gain. They accept pay—as much as they can get—but when the time comes to sacrifice their lives, they decline to do so. A man must be a fool, indeed, who will voluntarily give up his life for money; to merely risk it is another matter. Of what value is pay to a man who is about to die? Patriotism! Why should mercenaries display patriotism when it is non-existent in the nation at large? Courage! Why should a man face death in order that those who fear to fight—for whom he has, probably, the most profound contempt—may benefit? A mercenary army is held together solely by its military spirit and its desire for gain; it is bold enough against a very inferior foe; but against patriots of high quality it is worthless. These are the facts which account for the long and intricate manœuvres, varied by the occasional sack of a defence-

less city and the few battles fought solely in defence of their plunder, which were the principal features of the campaigns of Wallenstein and Tilly, as well as of the mercenaries of Italy in the fifteenth century, and of the Spanish mercenaries. Their object was to live at the expense of the inhabitants and to amass wealth. It is a truism that the employment of the mercenary is a sure sign of the decadence of a nation.

Systems of mercenary standing armies, composed of a small percentage of the people, came into use after the feudal system, and were in vogue throughout Europe at the commencement of the seventeenth century. These systems were broken up by Gustavus Adolphus with his patriotic Swedes. He certainly employed mercenaries and paid his troops; but his Swedes, until they became demoralised by their association with mercenaries, formed a patriotic nucleus which won his victories. His system, partly conscript, partly mercenary, was copied by all the nations of Europe. These systems were smashed to pieces by Napoleon with his patriotic and enthusiastic Frenchmen.

The bitter experience of defeat induced the Prussians to lay the foundation of their present system of universal training to arms; and thus we see the birth of the nation in arms. The startling successes of the Prussians in 1866 and 1870 induced all other nations of the world, with the exception of the Anglo-Saxon races, to follow their example. There

are now, as in the days of old, two distinct types of nations in the world, nations in arms and nations of civilians.

The modern nation in arms is the child of fear—fear of defeat in war and invasion. The same cause was at work which resulted in the nation of warriors of antiquity ; but as the nation in arms was evolved by the military scientist, so we find that it is but the scientific form of its prototype. Efficiency for war, pure and simple, would dictate standing forces, composed of every man capable of bearing arms, in a state of constant training and readiness for war. This principle was, as we have seen, adopted by nations of antiquity, and is still in vogue in savage nations of the present day. But though this method was eminently suited, from the point of view of war, to the simple social conditions of ancient times, or of the modern savage tribe, it is quite inappropriate, for economic reasons, to the complex conditions under which modern civilised communities exist. And yet, in all matters connected with war, efficiency for purposes of war must be the first consideration. Some modification of the above principle, which would render it applicable to modern conditions, had to be sought. The most simple modification, and one that is now self-evident, was to hold a certain portion of the available personnel of a nation in constant readiness, while the remainder, ready trained and organised, but employed in civil avocations, was prepared to act as a reinforcement if required. And here we

see that this method has been adopted by all nations in arms. Each able-bodied man must still be trained to arms ; each one, whether able-bodied or otherwise, must still take his place, if required, in the vast national organisation for war when war breaks out. But when a man is fully trained, he is permitted to return to civil life until the nation has need of his services. But though in private life, he is none the less a soldier or a sailor ; for he is enrolled, first in the active, then in the sedentary reserves until he is too old to bear arms. Then his security, like that of the women, children, feeble-minded, or weak-bodied, is assured by the courage and devotion of his more youthful comrades.

Nations in arms, in their search for efficiency, seek earnestly to render themselves superior in the martial qualities and in the military spirit to all possible opponents ; but as their leaders recognise that this is a matter of difficulty, and that success cannot be guaranteed, they ensure that all the men, and resources of every description, of the nation shall, at least, be available. We find that, in these nations in arms, the national forces, both naval and military, are organised on identical lines—an active force, an active reserve, and sedentary reserves.¹ The two former, the active force and the active reserve, constitute the armed force by means of which the nation hopes to

¹ Japan, an island power, has copied continental nations ; a sure sign, if we required one, that her problem of the national security was, fundamentally, identical with that of land powers.

dispose of its adversary. The period of training in the active army is dictated by the required state of efficiency, as well as by considerations of the numbers required in the standing force. The period of service in the active reserve is dictated solely by the numbers required. Thus we see Germany, with her population of 57,000,000, able to obtain an active reserve—with a period of service of about four years in that branch—of about 2,500,000 men; while France, with her population of only 38,000,000, is obliged to adopt a period of service in the active reserve of ten years in order to obtain the numbers approximately equal (about 1,800,000) to those of Germany.

The force we have termed the sedentary reserve¹ is, in most cases, divided into two portions, the first and second classes. A man, having completed his service in the active army and active reserve, is relegated to the sedentary reserves, in the case of Germany, for five years in the first and seven years in the second class; in the case of France, for six years in the first and six in the second class. But Germany still possesses a surplus of men, and these she forms into another reserve force called the "Landsturm," which can only be called out in the case of the invasion of the country. The numbers of these are unknown, but they consist of "all able-bodied men, between the age of seventeen and forty-five, who are neither in

¹ In Germany, the "Landwehr"; in France, the "Territorial Army."

the standing army nor in the reserves."¹ This force is similarly divided into two classes, and into this body are received all those who are "excused service for family reasons, men with minor bodily defects, and men temporarily unfit who are likely to become fit at a later date."² Only those men who are criminals, or who are mentally or physically unfit, are released from the obligation to naval or military service, and this statement holds true, practically, of all nations in arms.³ In nations in arms, men serve their country practically without pay ; but as it is everywhere recognised that the officer, and to some extent the non-commissioned officer, must be a man of high scientific knowledge of his profession, and must consequently be a professional man, these high ranks are taken, for the greater part, from those who elect to make a career of the army or navy, and are paid a living wage.

Though the incongruity of the statement may appear to be manifest, yet it cannot be denied that the nation in arms gives us an example of a high form, not only of patriotism, but of that unselfishness which is inculcated by Christianity, and which teaches that the strong should defend the weak and helpless,

¹ *The Statesman's Year Book*, 1905.

² *Handbook of the German Army*.

³ In Germany in 1898 these numbered 41,641 out of 503,415 men available for the annual contingent (*Handbook of the German Army*). In France criminals are not released from the obligation to military service, but are drafted into "Discipline Companies," and into the "Algerian Light Infantry" for service in the colonies.

and that the able-bodied man should give his life, if need be, for children, women, the aged, and infirm.

It seems evident that, on the score of numbers, no fault can be found with a nation in arms. Let us therefore turn to the martial qualities—training, organisation, discipline, patriotism, unity of purpose, and, above all, leadership and education.

In the schools the youth of the nation in arms is taught patriotism, devotion to duty, concentration of purpose, and the necessity for obedience. The able-bodied youth, on reaching man's estate, is further instructed in the active forces, while his training is by no means neglected when in the reserve. The armed forces of the nation constitute, indeed, a vast educational establishment, in which the civil virtues no less than the military—self-restraint and frugality—are taught to the whole people. The significance of this system of national education cannot be over-estimated, and the general level of practical knowledge, trustworthiness, mental and physical energy, of a people which enjoys such opportunities must infallibly rise far higher than that of a nation which lacks them. It must be understood that the training which the youth of a nation undergoes while in the armed forces is of a very severe nature, totally different to that which he receives in the British regular army, for instance.

It is perfectly evident from the study of history that patriotism, like other things in nature, will inevitably die out if there is no real reason for its

existence. It can really only flourish in times of adversity or of grave national danger ; whereas after a prolonged period of national prosperity, or the absence of war, it disappears unless its cultivation has been carefully fostered in the forcing house of education.

It is not only in the matter of the training and education of the people that the modern nation in arms has vastly improved on its prototype of the past ; for the nation, as a whole, is so carefully organised as a machine of war, so perfectly disciplined, its active forces disposed with such a true appreciation of all possible eventualities, that the whole available manhood is ready to spring to arms at a moment's notice in the hope that the initiative may be seized. If a first heavy blow can be struck at the enemy at the decisive moment, that is, while he is yet unready, ultimate victory can be practically assured. If successful in the delivery of this first blow, the enemy is to be granted no time for recuperation, but blow follows blow in rapid succession, until he is beaten to his knees, and finally forced to submit. If, on the other hand, the attempt to seize the initiative is a failure, every national resource of whatever description is organised, and available with which to stem the tide of disaster. Such a nation may be trusted to fight to the last ; for where there exists patriotism, discipline, and organisation—which argue scientific national leadership—unity of purpose will never be absent.

In nations in arms the political demagogue, who,

as history shows, is the principal cause of dissension, is discountenanced by the supreme authority and the national leaders ; while the education of the mass of the people is so advanced as to enable the nation, as a whole, to recognise the hopelessness of the attempt to direct a nation in matters pertaining to war when parties are eternally seeking to further their own interests at the expense of the national interest. It is certainly true that there are other causes at work to rouse discord in a nation. Of these the principal is the never-ending hostility which, if history speaks true, exists between the upper and lower classes of society, the well-to-do and the poverty-stricken. It is also true that party-conflict is generally the outcome of this hostility ; but it is also true that the demagogue invariably stirs up this strife for his own purposes.

In time of war, and especially of disaster, the inevitable rise in the price of provisions, and the consequent increased difficulty of finding the means of subsistence, too often impels the poverty-stricken to attempt to wrest by force the necessities of life from those who possess more than they require. But the best safeguard against such an uprising in time of emergency is education in peace in habits of frugality and obedience, together with such a state of perfect readiness for war as will enable the nation to avoid defeat. It is evident also that scientific national leadership in peace, combined with a perfected system of organisation, will go far to reduce the danger of

revolution to a minimum. For every man has his work, and is compelled to accomplish it ; there exist few "unemployed" and "unemployable," "loafers," "hooligans"—the forces of anarchy—to rise in revolution when national disaster brings them their opportunity.

It is true that the experiences of Russia in the late war hardly appear at the first glance to bear out these statements. But if we look more deeply, we see that, compared with the more highly organised nations in arms, Russia was at a serious disadvantage. A comparatively small percentage only of her men were trained, while the sedentary reserves were practically unorganised.¹ A large untrained and unorganised, and for these reasons uncontrollable, section of the people constitutes a serious weakness to a nation in time of war and especially of disaster. And we must also remember that the Russians found themselves pitted against the most perfect machine of war, so far as we can judge, which has yet made its appearance in the world, and that, itself being an inefficient machine, it suffered proportionately. The nation which can display remarkable discipline when engaged in war against a feeble adversary may yet collapse utterly when subjected to the attack of an enemy more powerful than itself. The lesson taught by the attempted revolution in Russia is not that a nation in arms is an undisciplined organisation, but that success in modern war demands the display of the very

¹ See statement of military systems at end of book.

highest form of national discipline, and that therefore every man, whether able-bodied or otherwise, should be disciplined and trained to take his place in the national organisation. Any precautions are justified which have for their object the prevention of revolution in time of disaster, and we should not fail to notice that the revolution in Russia has been checked owing, so far as can be seen, simply to the fact that the army, which is, after all, a national organisation, has refused to side with the revolutionaries. Let us imagine the state of affairs if the Russians had employed mercenaries, or if their armies had been composed of a small percentage only of the able-bodied men.

It will, perhaps, be admitted that, in the matter of the education of the people in the martial qualities, the nation in arms is infinitely superior to its prototype, the nation of warriors of antiquity. Let us now turn to the consideration of leadership, or moral force.

The history of every nation—and this holds true of all—can be divided into two parts—the struggle of the nation for supremacy over, or for existence against, its rivals, and the struggles of the various sections of the community for supremacy within the nation, that is, for the leadership of the nation, with all its material advantages. We find that the most primitive form of leadership is that of a monarch with absolute power, who regards his people as his private property, to do with as he wills. Of such a

type, the Popes of the early Middle Ages, Philip II of Spain, Louis XIV of France, and Charles I of England are well-known and conspicuous examples. In ancient and mediæval times the king used his power to the uttermost, claiming a divine right, and supporting his authority with a powerful—not too powerful—nobility and clergy wedded to his interests. But in every case we find that whenever a very weak, very extravagant, or very brutal man came to the throne, either the nobility or the people rose against and overthrew him. After such a revolt, the strongest man usually came to the front and established himself and his dynasty. But in certain cases the nation, utterly disgusted with kings generally, decided to retain the supreme power in their own hands. There thereupon ensued a struggle between the nobility and the masses—the rich and poor—which resulted in various forms of government according as one or the other gained the upper hand. If the nobility, an oligarchy or monarchy was usually established ; if the masses, a republic.

Or, it might be, if neither party won decisively, that a king with limited power, or two kings, or two consuls, or a senate of popular representatives, were appointed. The opposing parties in the state sometimes became neatly balanced, an equilibrium of power, or force, being the temporary result. But this state of equilibrium seldom lasted for any length of time ; and a privileged or ruling class invariably, in the end, established its authority. Thus the Grecian

states having overthrown the tyrants, the Athenians developed into a republic, the supreme power in the hands of professional orators ; the Spartans into an oligarchy. The Carthaginians, a community of merchants drawing their inspiration from the mother country of the Phœnicians, were in the first instance ruled by two magistrates with a senate, but this system of leadership gradually developed—or degenerated—into a close oligarchy. The Romans having passed through the monarchical stage, developed into a republic and were ruled by two consuls and a senate, the patricians and the plebeians constantly struggling for the mastery. As the empire grew in extent, the system of leadership reverted, after many revolutions, to the monarchical system, an emperor being appointed ; and, later again, as the empire still increased, two emperors were appointed.

The Italian cities of the Middle Ages passed through similar struggles and developed, most of them, into republics. Venice and Genoa were ruled by oligarchies. The Polish nobility gradually withdrew all power from the hands of the king ; but so pronounced was the jealousy amongst them, that they preferred to retain the semblance of a monarchy. They themselves elected their kings ; but these elections gave rise to the most vicious intrigue, in which the neighbouring nations came to take part. Poland became a bone of contention to these neighbours, and being helpless owing to the absence of all leadership, was partitioned. Great Britain and France

have passed through the same phases, and developed, the one into a republic, the other into a limited monarchy in which the supreme power is vested in the people—or so it is said. It is interesting to note, however, that a republic almost invariably appoints a president, who, during his term of office, holds far greater power, apparently, than the king of a limited monarchy.

There seems no reason to doubt that, with a view to the avoidance of civil war, the system by which the people govern themselves, in which various parties are equally balanced—the balance of force—is the best, provided there exists a supreme authority, a king or a president, to hold the balance. But in the absence of a supreme authority this system, which has been proved times out of number to be tantamount to an absence of leadership, is almost necessarily fatal. The reason seems simple. One party sooner or later establishes an ascendancy over the others, it uses its power to further its own interests, drives its opponents to desperation, with the result that class warfare ensues.

The absence of a supreme authority, or absence of leadership, is also almost necessarily fatal in war against a neighbouring nation. For government by the people develops, of necessity, into government by discussion and argument. But so numerous are the various points of view, and so many are the side issues, that a number of men engaged in a discussion on any topic almost unavoidably lose sight of the

main issue, while the discussion is often unduly prolonged. Government by discussion is consequently unfavourable in cases where quick decision and sudden, rapid, and resolute action are essential.¹ But these are exactly the characteristics which are vitally necessary to successful leadership in war. An army or a navy directed by a weak chief who constantly seeks advice, or by a council of war, is—it is a military platitude—at a hopeless disadvantage; while an armed force governed by the rank and file is an inconceivable monstrosity. Nations in the struggle for existence, however, are also, on occasions, called on to decide quickly and to put forth effort with suddenness, rapidity, and resolution, and more especially is this the case at the time of the outbreak of actual hostilities. Nations are, indeed, as we have endeavoured to show, merely forces in the world, and are dependent for success in the struggle for existence on the display of exactly the same qualities as those which lead armed forces to victory.

Of all the systems that were tested by the ancients, that of the Incas in Peru appears to have been the most efficient for all purposes. Theirs was a benevolent despotism; and, according to Prescott, not only was the nation invariably successful in its external wars, but the people lived in great happiness. The Emperor

¹ The mutiny at Spithead in 1797 gives us an illustration of the dangers which result from dilatoriness and irresolution on the part of the national leaders in time of emergency. The outbreak of the mutiny at the Nore was the direct consequence.

was the God as well as the supreme ruler. He was, as a boy, carefully educated to his duties. His power was supported by a clergy which was also the nobility, and which was composed of the Incas, the dominant race in the country. These were, without exception, carefully educated as children to the duties they would be called on to perform. In time of war the armies, officered by the Incas, were composed of the whole nation. The system only collapsed on the appearance of a race of Gods—the Spaniards—from an unknown, and previously unthought-of, world, whose warlike arts, treachery, and armament carried all before them. The system was that of a supreme authority assisted by a trained staff, which controlled the armed forces and every branch of the national organisation.

With the appearance on the scene of the nation in arms, the scientifically constructed machine of war, a new and scientific system of leadership also quite naturally came into existence. The vast numbers of armed men required a highly trained staff if they were to be efficiently directed. But these armed men, if the necessity ever arose for the employment of all, practically constituted the nation, that is, by far the better part, mentally and physically, of the nation. Hence the trained staff must be organised with a view to directing the whole nation in time of war. But if success in war is to be assured, preparation must be made in peace with a definite object in view. Hence the trained staff must hold power in peace in

all matters relating to war and preparation for war. Armies have now become national institutions ; and it is inevitable that the general staff, which was primarily established as "the brain of an army," should develop automatically into the brain of a nation.

Though the general staff of a nation in arms does not at present hold supreme authority in peace and war, yet it is probable that it holds far more power than is generally believed. For any man who has made a close study of the science of war will at once admit that these national problems cannot be separated into civil and military ; they are, one and all, part and parcel of the science of strategy—the preparation of force and the application of it—by which a nation must be directed if it would triumph in the struggle for national existence, or if it would ensure the comfort and welfare of the people. The natural line of development of the leadership of a nation in arms is, it seems probable, in the direction of a staff of trained experts, with a single chief to accept responsibility for the actions of the whole, and to give a decision when difference of opinion exists between any two departments of his staff.

The advantages of such a system of leadership, from the point of view of war, if not from that of so-called peace, are obvious. All the members of this staff being experts, trained scientifically in the same school, difference of opinion can seldom arise. This early training in the same school is, indeed, a matter

of vital importance to the attainment of success ; for it is essential that the brains of any organisation should act in complete harmony ; antagonism between the various portions of a staff, which leads to conflict, can only result in the disorganisation of the whole and subsequent failure.

In those nations in which every man is disciplined and trained to take his place in the national scheme of organisation, the most capable compete with one another, or are selected for the possession of certain qualities ; and these, having been put through a course of rigorous training, go to form the general staff, where their education in the art of leadership is finally completed.¹ The general staff is thus composed of the ablest brains in the community, and in it incapacity should find no place ; it is in close touch with all the scientific and business organisations as well as with the armed forces ; it controls the resources and manhood of the country ; it seeks to promote the true welfare, happiness, and comfort of the community, for by such means alone can content and unity of purpose be ensured ; it gives scientific thought to all matters of national interest, even to those apparently airy trifles which in reality are problems of grave moment on which the future

¹ Mr. Spenser Wilkinson, in *The Brains of an Army* and other works, has described the German general staff, the system of training, and the manner in which it is used. He points out that this staff constitutes a school of leadership, and clearly shows the value of such an organisation.

of the nation may depend. The weight of its expert opinion is such that only genius, or its antithesis, stupid obstinacy, can venture to combat its decisions ; but genius quickly receives recognition, and—so does stupid obstinacy. It seems probable—as the true nature of war comes to be recognised and to receive closer scientific study—that general staffs will be recruited from the best men available irrespective of their social status in life ; for, unless such a precaution is adopted, a general staff will quite naturally, in process of time, develop into a close oligarchy, and will be worthless.

It is true that, in England at the present day, there exists a prejudice against the expert ; and though it is beyond question the case that the opinion of experts will often differ, yet it will usually be found that such differences are superficial rather than radical. It is, indeed, only the foolish man who will seriously maintain that the services of the “quack” are preferable to those of the doctor. But then, again, in Great Britain there are those who maintain that even in questions relating to war it is the trained fighting man who is the “quack,” and the civilian amateur who is the doctor.

Can there be any doubt that the system of leadership of the nation in arms is far superior to those which were tried and found wanting by the ancients ? It will at once be admitted that the leadership of a genius, who can instil a patriotic or religious fervour into the nation at large, constitutes the ideal form of

leadership; but the genius is usually conspicuous in the world by his absence from it. Those nations which have good reason to fear their powerful neighbours—to whom, that is, the struggle for existence is a reality—cannot venture to trust the national security to the fortuitous rise of a genius at the critical moment. To these nations the business of war, both external and internal, which is the inevitable outcome of the struggle for existence, is the real and unending problem which must always be faced, and of which the solution must always be sought. Nothing may be left to chance; and it is recognised that victory in external war, followed by territorial expansion, is the best safeguard against internal war.

If we required a proof of the practical efficiency of the system of leadership of the more highly organised nations in arms, we find it in the careful preparation, with a definite object in view, which is so remarkable a feature of modern warfare. The proximate adversary is marked down; his resources and characteristics are studied; his weak points are noted; he is isolated and weakened; he is mystified and misled as to the time and point of attack. Meanwhile the preparation of the overpowering force, with which the hostile armed forces are to be destroyed, and with which the decisive blow is finally to be struck at a vital point, progresses. And the preparation of that "force" demands, in itself, a highly organised and expert staff of leaders—men, not only with an intimate knowledge of the science of war and of the military machines

with which war must be waged, but with the trained capacity to form a correct appreciation of the situation as it alters from month to month, and from day to day, as well as to foresee the exact moment at which to strike.

Diplomacy and preparation run hand in hand ; the latter seeks to have all in readiness for the delivery of the first blow ; the former seeks to precipitate hostilities at the auspicious moment in order that the initiative may be seized and the onus cast on the enemy. Such ideas may be very horrible ; but can any man who has given the smallest study to war, ancient and modern, deny that, in spite of nineteen hundred years of Christianity, they are more true of the life of modern nations than of those of antiquity ? Are we to learn no lessons from Napoleon, from the Prussians in 1866 and 1870, from the Boers in 1899, and from both the Russians and Japanese in 1904 ? It has never been denied that a man attacked by a footpad with a knife is justified in using any weapon on which he can lay hands ; modern nations would do well to carry weapons at all times in this world of fraud and force.

President Roosevelt, in his message to Congress, has written : " We should as a nation do everything in our power for the cause of honourable peace. We should do all in our power to hasten the day when there shall be peace among the nations — a peace based upon justice and not upon cowardly submission to wrong. . . . As yet," he continues,

“there is no likelihood of establishing any kind of international power, of whatever sort, which can effectively check wrongdoing, and in these circumstances it would be both a foolish and an evil thing for a great and free nation to deprive itself of the power to protect its own rights, and even in exceptional cases to stand up for the rights of others. Nothing would more promote iniquity, nothing would further defer the reign upon earth of peace and righteousness, than for the free and enlightened peoples which, though with much stumbling and many shortcomings, nevertheless strive towards justice, deliberately to render themselves powerless while leaving every despotism and barbarism armed and able to work their wicked will. The chance for the settlement of disputes peacefully, by arbitration, now depends mainly upon the possession by the nations that mean to do right of sufficient armed strength to make their purpose effective.”

In other words, right must still be maintained by might.

And it must not be forgotten that a nation which seeks peace hands the initiative to any nation of criminal tendencies with unscrupulous designs. The righteous nation which desires to avoid unscrupulous methods in its dealings with its neighbours, which intends to grant its adversary the inestimable boon of the initiative, must be, obviously, at a grave disadvantage if face to face with a nation of criminal tendencies. Such a nation, like the peaceful wayfarer, must be armed at

all points, alert, agile, moving warily, ready to strike fiercely and strike home on the merest threat. By no other means can its security be assured.

And even from the ethical point of view we should not be too hasty in judging the unscrupulous statesman. There is much to be said for him ; there are two sides to the question. Admiral Coligny was a man above reproach ; he met intrigue with almost childish honesty, even as the Incas met the gross treachery of Pizarro. If he had met intrigue with intrigue, it is probable that he would not only have saved his own life, but that of some thirty thousand Huguenots. Taking into consideration the morals of the world at that time, was Coligny fully justified in the righteous course he adopted ? It must not be forgotten that his followers placed implicit trust in his leadership ; more, they placed their lives in his hand. Could he, by his righteous leadership, assure eternal happiness in the hereafter, not only for himself, but for all these thirty thousand Huguenots ? If so, then, undoubtedly, he was justified in the course he adopted.

William the Silent has been held up to us as a grand character, which was, however, marred by his extreme duplicity. He met intrigue with intrigue ; he sacrificed his own life, and, who knows, possibly his prospects in the world to come, to the cause ; but the cause triumphed, and no man can say how many were the lives of his countrymen that he saved by his duplicity. Which of these two men was the finer character ?

Cromwell, another of the very few examples we can find of the righteous statesman, did not hesitate to meet fraud and force with fraud and force; he was, indeed, always rather beforehand with his enemy, and hence, to a great extent, his success. Yet few will now deny that he was a truly righteous man.

It is certainly questionable whether a national leader is justified in considering aught but the material welfare of the people. And especially is this true in the case of a man who has been elected by the popular vote and is paid for his services. He surely has been called to lead in order that he should, so far as may be, ensure the comfort and prosperity—and peace, if you will—of the nation in this world, not in the next. Individual men, who believe in a future existence, may certainly be trusted to so shape their lives that they may merit happiness hereafter; and there appears to be no warrant for the conception that a national leader, by directing the energies of the nation as a whole into the paths of righteousness, can ensure the happiness hereafter of the nation as a whole. It is thus probably the case that the national leader who seeks only to lead the nation in the paths of righteousness, regardless of its material prosperity, considers, first and foremost, his own interest in the hereafter, and disregards his duty to his country, for which he, perhaps, receives a high salary.

The national leader whose sense of the abstract wickedness of war is so pronounced that he feels it his duty to avoid war at all costs, and with that object

in view to reduce the armaments of his country, would surely do well and righteously to abdicate his leadership lest he should neglect his duty to his countrymen. In this ethical aspect the problem of national leadership is, it would seem, identical with that of the leadership of armed men in war. The duty of the leader in war, whatsoever his rank, is to destroy the hostile force, or as much of it as possible, with the least possible cost in life to his comrades and subordinates. Though the poisoning of the enemy's water supply, or the deliberate murder of prisoners or of civilian inhabitants, is rightly regarded as an utter atrocity, yet it must not be forgotten that certain modern military authorities have upheld Napoleon's massacre of his Turkish prisoners under the plea of vital necessity, that necessity being the security of his own army.¹

The general must endeavour, as the only method by which he may hope to win victory, to mystify and mislead his enemy by every conceivable stratagem, by feints and demonstrations, and by the deliberate circulation of false information. There are few men—the heaven-born genius excepted—who can effect the mystification of the enemy and the circulation of false information, except by deliberate falsehood, by acting a falsehood, or by prevarication. In any case, duplicity, or the intention to deceive, remains. If, however, the soldier's sense of right and wrong is so strong that

¹ See *Napoleon as a General*, by the late Count von Wartenburg, colonel of the Prussian General Staff.

he refuses to adopt these measures, he, considering only his own interests in the future, deliberately acts the part of a traitor to his comrades and subordinates. He would, it is evident, do wisely to avoid the soldier's profession. But then, again, can he expect others to fight for him? Why should he live in peace and comfort in this world, and secure happiness and reward in the next, while others bear the burden and punishment for him both in this world and in the next? No amount of pay can compensate a man for the loss of his life; and the man who pays others—the ignorant and the foolish—to sacrifice for him, not only their lives, but their hopes of happiness in the hereafter, can only be termed a most despicable coward. The coward is not only a burden on the community in time of war, but is a positive danger to it; for he will seldom hesitate to further his own interest by acting as a spy, or by crying out loudly at the critical moment that all is lost, and that surrender is the only possible alternative to death. It is generally conceded that fighting men are justified in putting to death proved cowards on the battlefield, who, after all, are merely men who sacrifice the lives of their comrades in pursuit of their own interests. Why should there be one law for soldiers and sailors and another for statesmen and civilians? The nation which loves freedom and righteousness and justice as the very essence of its being will be the first of all to put to death all cowards in time of war.

There can be no question but that the modern

nation in arms is an infinitely more effective machine of war than the nation of warriors of ancient days. Nothing is left to fortune ; nothing is left to the prejudiced idiosyncrasies of the ignorant. Each step by which the nation is to attain its ambition, whether legitimate or otherwise, is worked out down to the very smallest detail by expert scientists. The nation in arms is a scientific machine of war, pure and simple ; and its appearance on the earth is of tremendous significance. It proclaims to the world at large that, in spite of nineteen hundred years of Christianity, might is still right, and that fraud and force are still the foundations on which nations exist.

Society is apt to close its eyes to certain well-known but unpleasant facts. It shudders and turns aside from the streets of London after nightfall ; it refuses to consider what would be the immediate result of the withdrawal of the police force and all armed men from London and the great cities of the world ; it refuses to believe that every provision shop, jeweller's shop, and bank would be gutted within twenty-four or, at most, forty-eight hours. Such blindness renders the social life of the well-to-do—but not of the waifs and strays of society—more pleasant and harmonious. But to be blind to unpleasant facts is positively fatal in war ; and the people which disregards the fact that there is no police force to maintain order amongst nations is itself in a fair way to meet destruction.

Even as the nation of fighting men of ancient days invariably triumphed over the degenerate nation

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whose men failed to train themselves to war, or who feared to fight, so it is to be predicted with almost mathematical certainty that the modern nation in arms will, if it be desirable in its own interests, strike down a nation of an obsolete type. Or, in the German Chancellor's own words,¹ "Down with everything that comes in the way of German welfare and greatness in the world ! "

The British empire lies in the way of German aggrandisement.

¹ See Daily Press, January 28th, 1907.

CHAPTER V

THE FIGHTING CAPACITY OF THE BRITISH NATION

Inefficiency as disclosed by the Boer War—Are British fighting men mercenaries?—Projected reforms and their value—The national army—The regular army of to-day—Its military spirit—The problem of the dearth of officers.

or civilian
NO educated soldier ^{or civilian} will deny that, if the Boers had been other than a nation profoundly ignorant of the science of war, the defeat of the British people and the loss of South Africa would long since have been an accomplished fact. Not only was the British army, which was despatched in the first instance to the theatre of hostilities, altogether insufficient in numbers for the task in hand, but it was sent on its mission without the smallest attempt at preparation of the theatre of war, and with but a shadowy conception of the manner in which that mission was to be accomplished. The failure to arrive at a correct, or even approximate, estimate of the numbers which would be required was, as is well known, due to the lack of a trained general staff; but the vague conception of the nature of the forthcoming contest, and, above all, the haphazard manner in which the nation was permitted to drift all unwittingly

into what might well have been a life-and-death struggle, were due, few men will now deny, to the absence of system and trained capacity under which the national leadership laboured.

The people of Great Britain, or, for that matter, of the British Empire, were not trained to arms ; no national organisation for war existed ; and even the greater portion of the land forces of the nation were unorganised, without officers or staff, artillery, transport, or the various departments which are essential to the efficiency of any armed body. Foreign nations, indeed, have not scrupled to state that the British nation fought the Boer War with mercenaries ; but to this assertion great exception has been taken both by the British people and by soldiers. If, however, it be a fact—a fact which is recognised by foreign nations—it is foolish of the British people to refuse to face it themselves, for it may be responsible in the future for a great national disaster. Let us ask ourselves plainly, to what extent the characteristics of British soldiers resemble those of mercenaries.

The British officer most certainly does not fight for gain. He is not, compared with other professions in Great Britain, highly paid. For success in his profession private means are essential ; or, at least, the man without private means loses many chances and is at a grave disadvantage throughout his career.¹ The rank and file of the regular army, however, are, compared

¹ A subaltern in an infantry regiment in England cannot, indeed, live on his pay ; a captain can only do so with great difficulty.

with the men of nations in arms, very highly paid. At the time of the Boer War, as is very well known, they were drawn from the lowest classes of the community. It is, generally speaking, true to say that they enlisted as the only means to avoid starvation, though, of course, it is equally true that many joined from love of the profession. The army was generally held in contempt throughout the country, and men who enlisted were, in many districts, regarded as having disgraced themselves and their families. It is thus true that the army was recruited of men who sought to make a livelihood of it, but not of men whose sole thoughts were of gain. In this characteristic they were quite different to the mercenaries of the Middle Ages.

And neither can the British soldier be accused of an undue regard for his life. It is true that attacks in the Boer War were not pressed home regardless of life as they were in past wars, as they were by the Japanese, and as they certainly will be in future wars by the troops of nations in arms. It was not that either the rank and file or the officers feared to sacrifice their lives, but simply that they were seldom called on to do so. This failing, for it was an undoubted failing, was due to the false conception of war which had taken root in the whole country, and even amongst the bulk of the officers of the army. It had come to be considered that frontal attacks were "impossible" and should not be undertaken ; that the enemy should be tied to his position by a "holding attack," outflanked,

and rolled up. The Boers, however, being mounted, were more mobile than the British, and it became the flank attack which was almost impossible, and the frontal attack which was that generally forced on the British by stress of circumstances. And, again, it was very generally believed that, if a body of men was at a hopeless disadvantage, humanity justified a surrender—an idea which is perfectly fatal to all hopes of victory in a hard-fought war. And then, in addition, it would seem that there may have been a feeling amongst the senior officers that if men in large numbers were lost, they would be subjected to very severe criticism, and possibly to punishment, by the people; they consequently hesitated to order a determined assault. And we should remember that Wellington always hesitated to risk the loss of a single brigade lest the whole British army should be forthwith recalled from the Peninsular. This hesitation probably has its rise in the knowledge of the British people, government, and press, that the number of British fighting men is not unlimited, and that they must, accordingly, be carefully husbanded; but it was also, almost certainly, due to the extreme value which is attached to life in every highly civilised community.

It will, in any case, be admitted that, in this aspect, the British soldier can hardly be regarded as a mercenary.

But, nevertheless, there are certain unpleasant points of similarity. In the latter days of the Roman Empire,

as Gibbon tells us, the Roman mercenaries refused to carry their armour as being too heavy. They had, therefore, to face the prospect of wounds, or to run away. They chose, he says, the latter alternative. It has long since been considered inadvisable to make British soldiers carry their full equipment either in peace or war ; it is so heavy ; and recruits cannot be obtained if they think they are to be made beasts of burden. Continental troops, on the other hand, who are compelled to serve, and who are strenuously trained, carry out their drills and manœuvres fully equipped. "Drill heavy, march light," is, indeed, a well-worn military maxim, which merely asserts the truism that men must be trained if any high form of mental or physical endurance is to be expected of them. One shudders to think how the marching of British soldiers in a serious war, when they will be obliged to carry their own equipment, will compare with that of their possible continental enemies. The delivery of sudden and rapid blows, by which victory is to be gained, and which depends on mobility, will be quite impossible to British generals. They will, of necessity, be eternally out-marched and out-manœuvred ; and the British politicians, public, and press will scream hysterically at their incapacity.

And, again, the private soldier has now—since the Boer War—received an increase of pay in the hope of attracting a better class of man to the colours. This better class enters the army not from patriotic motives or for love of his profession, but from mercenary

motives. It is questionable whether he will make a better soldier than the one that adopted the army as a profession to avoid starvation. The men will have more to lose by death, less to fear from running away. The army has become more of a commercial concern ; and it must not be forgotten that, as a matter of business, no man will sacrifice his life.

And, moreover, inefficiency or incapacity, either in the commissioned ranks or in the rank and file, has never been regarded as a crime, or even an offence, except, perhaps, during the period when Lord Wolseley was Commander-in-Chief. Ignorance and incapacity, consequently, are never punished ; while mere efficiency amongst the rank and file is now rewarded by a higher rate of pay. This has always been typical of the mercenary ; for the recruiting problem is the one to which all other military problems must be held subordinate.

The mercenary is a creature of gradual growth, the outcome of a long period of national military inefficiency. At the commencement of the Thirty Years War the pay of the Swedes of Gustavus Adolphus was quite insignificant, while their patriotism and enthusiasm knew no bounds. At the end of it—having fought with, and against, mercenaries—they had become demoralised, and it was their cupidity which knew no bounds. At the period of the operations around Nuremberg the Swedish troops, especially the higher officers, had come to regard the war as a means of enriching themselves, as an oppor-

tunity for pilfering; and we find the army becoming mutinous for higher rates of pay.

It will doubtless be remembered that in the later stages of the Boer War, when it had been found necessary to send the volunteers home to look after their private interests, the army could only be maintained at the necessary strength by the employment of pure mercenaries—untrained men—who were ordinarily paid as much as five shillings a day. Considerable numbers of foreigners—some of them, it is to be feared, the sweepings of the gutters of out-of-the-way corners of the world—were freely enlisted. Some of these were Boer emissaries. Even the Kaffir *employés*, scouts, guides, cattle-guards, etc., were paid four shillings a day; while the white man in charge of them received as much as fifteen shillings to one pound a day. Certain “specialists,” such as “rebel hunters,” who were termed “intelligence officers,” and whose special mission was to obtain evidence against rebels in Cape Colony, were paid two, three, or even four pounds a day. Most of these, though there were some brilliant exceptions who served from patriotic motives, were, it will be admitted, mercenaries pure and simple. Patriotic troops cannot serve with mercenaries without becoming demoralised; and it is marvellous, indeed, and the highest proof of the devotion to duty of the British regular soldier, that he failed to mutiny for higher wages.

Thus, though we can deny that the British regular army is at this time a mercenary army in the true

sense of the word, yet it certainly appears destined to develop in due course into one, unless, that is, very radical reforms are introduced. The same may be said of the militia and yeomanry, who are paid even more highly, especially in time of war, than the regular army. It is true that there exists a considerable number of unpaid "volunteers"; but these are but slightly trained, and, in view of their lack of officers, discipline, and organisation, cannot be termed armed forces in the true sense of the expression. It is the case, moreover, that they are only available for service in a contingency which the late Prime Minister, speaking as the President of the Council of Imperial Defence, has stated to be "impossible," that is, the invasion of the country. A certain number of them, however, served in South Africa, and may very probably be trusted to volunteer again in an emergency. On service they are paid at the same rates as the regular soldier.

British sailors, on the other hand, although they are paid, are, at present, on a totally different footing to the land forces. The service is extremely popular throughout the country; a better class of man is obtained; and the navy is, far more than the army, part and parcel of the nation. It has, however, lately been asserted that considerable numbers of trained British sailors, who have completed their time in the navy, are attracted by the high rates of pay to the American navy. If this statement is true, it would seem that mercenary motives are not entirely foreign to British seamen.

In the event of a great war, if the numbers of the navy prove insufficient, the same methods must be adopted to fill its ranks as were adopted in the case of the army in South Africa. In the Napoleonic wars, the pressgang—the worst form of conscription—was freely employed ; but it is very improbable that the nation will again brook similar treatment. The nation has progressed since those days. Soldiers, in considerable numbers, will doubtless be drafted to ships ; but it is to be feared that the sweepings of the home ports and of the mercantile marine, including foreigners in large numbers, termed volunteers, will be freely enlisted at extortionate rates of pay. But a great reform is now about to be introduced as regards the army ; and, if successful, it will probably in time also embrace the navy.

The present Secretary of State for War is endeavouring to make of the problem of Imperial Defence a non-party question. He has declared his opinion that a nation in arms is the only safeguard of the public interest. He has also explained the principle on which the projected nation in arms is to be formed.

The proposed organisation is likened to a “military cone” with the sharp point of finely tempered metal—the regular army—of the very highest degree of military efficiency ; while the bulk of the cone is to consist of the present auxiliary forces—the militia, yeomanry, and volunteers—amalgamated into a national army. The regular army, the point of the

cone, is to number 160,000 men. It is to be employed, in ordinary circumstances, in the upkeep of the garrisons of oversea possessions; while, in time of war, it will be available as an expeditionary force. Arrangements are to be made for the formation of a "special contingent," to supply the waste of war in this expeditionary force, and to furnish certain non-combatant units in which a high state of efficiency, and strict discipline, are not considered essential. It is to consist of men trained on "a militia basis," that is, for six months only; and training battalions are to be formed for this purpose. The regular army has, lately, been cut down by several battalions in order to fit in with this scheme, or for some other reason.

The bulk of the cone, the national army, is to consist of 300,000 men, fitted with artillery (obsolete, needless to say), transport, etc., and organised in divisions on a territorial basis, rifle clubs and cadet corps being affiliated. The men of this force are to be recruited for four years, to be paid at service rates when embodied or called out for training, and to be at liberty to retire on giving three months' notice, or paying five pounds compensation.

It has been determined to entrust the administration of this national, or territorial, army to county associations, which will include not only regular and territorial officers, but representatives of county and borough councils and universities. Though this system is indefensible from the point of view of

efficiency for war, yet it is certainly calculated to arouse the interest of the people in the army; and this latter is a consideration of no small importance under present conditions.

The exact period of training that the men of this force are to receive appears to be doubtful. They are to go into camp for fifteen days annually if they can afford the time, or, failing that, for eight days. If, however, war breaks out, the whole force is to be mobilised and trained for six months.

In its first inception this national army was apparently destined for employment oversea as well as for home defence—according to circumstances. The acceptance of the principle of a national army for employment oversea is, none will deny, an enormous stride in advance; for it practically discards the old time-honoured and foolish theory of a passive defence. But, unfortunately, this principle now appears to have been dropped; either because it is feared that nobody will join the national army; or because such serious opposition to the measure is to be expected in the Houses of Parliament, that the Government will not venture to introduce it. Perfect faith is to be placed in the patriotism of the national army; and it is confidently anticipated that, when the emergency arises, whole divisions, and not merely individual men, will volunteer to fight their country's battles abroad. It is devoutly to be hoped that this confidence is not misplaced, or that the patriotism of the national army will never be put to the proof. The

voluntary idea has, indeed, in this projected national army, been carried to its logical conclusion. The men of it are to be trained or not in peace time, they are to fight or not in war time, according to their own sweet will and pleasure. No compulsion, of any sort, is, on any account, to be used. It is an embryo army in which the rank and file are to lead.

There is, however, another and more vital aspect of this national army. The willing men only of the nation will serve in it; the unwilling will refuse to do so. The number of willing men the country possesses can be roughly estimated—including navy, regular army, and auxiliary forces—at 1,000,000, though a considerable number of these, it is to be feared, have neither the expectation nor the desire to fight under any circumstances. The male population of the British Islands numbers about 20,000,000. It seems probable that of these some 7,000,000 are fit for service both mentally and physically. We thus have about 6,000,000 men in the country without a vestige of military training and who are altogether unorganised. What is to be expected of this vast mass in time of a great national war? One million of them, roused to a sense of danger, may in time of invasion perhaps come forward—an estimate which will probably prove to be very optimistic. The remaining 5,000,000—together with another 4,000,000 to 5,000,000, perhaps, who are unfit for service—will pursue their ordinary avocations. These will, however, we may be quite certain, include all the

"unemployable," the "wasters" and "hooligans" of every strata of society. This is the very class which constitutes a danger to every community in time of trouble. It is the class of all others which it is most necessary to drag into the educational organisation; it is the class which is left out of the scheme of the projected national army. The project proposes, in fact, to gild the refined gold of the nation, and to leave the base metal to deteriorate.

The national army, not too highly disciplined, organised, or trained, and, it is to be feared, with very few trained officers, must face the possibility of a war on two sides—against a magnificently appointed outside force of, possibly, greatly superior numbers—that is, if invasion happens to prove possible—and against a possible revolution from within. The national army must indeed be composed of very fine men—gods, in fact—if it can cope with the situation. But what is to be done? For the modern British conception of "Liberty"—though, it should be noted, not the law of the land—denies the right of the state to compel the services of the manhood of the nation to safeguard the interests of the community; compulsion, whatsoever its nature, is, it is argued, incompatible with true freedom.

The Secretary of State, however, assumes, in common with most Englishmen, that the British navy is already in command of the sea and is assured of it at the outbreak of war. Englishmen indeed, like the Athenians,

the Carthaginians, and the Venetians, appear to consider that the "command of the sea" is their heritage, a heritage which has been presented to them by a wise and beneficent Providence. The navy being in command of the sea, it is then assumed that the country will be granted a considerable period in which to "work up" the national army into a state of efficiency. But if the navy is assured of the command of the sea at the outbreak of hostilities, why waste time? It would surely be wiser to possess a national army in readiness to strike without delay at the enemy. It is a mere military platitude to assert that the chief object of the enemy, in such circumstances, would be to gain time; and that our chief object would be to strike him to his knees before he could obtain the assistance of allies, or before he could destroy one of our allies. Time in war is a factor which can by no means be disregarded.

It can hardly be believed that a national army can be worked up into a weapon with which to strike at a continental nation in arms in a few weeks, or even in six months. An army with partially trained officers is little better than an armed rabble. Or is it seriously believed that the sharp point of the cone, about one-twentieth of the size of the hostile cone—it is fatal to forget that a hostile cone exists—could, without the assistance of the national army, make the smallest impression? It is either intended to drive the finely tempered point of the British cone—the bulk of the cone being rotten—into a hostile cone

which is finely tempered throughout; or it is intended to let slip the decisive moment. What is really intended seems, of course, to be obvious enough. It is that while the navy is fighting for the command of the sea, there will be time in which to "work up" the national army. But if the navy must fight for the command of the sea, it is liable, like any other armed body, to defeat and destruction at the hands of a superior force. It is liable, not only to be fought down through lack of sufficient reserves, but to sudden surprise, or to be outpaced in naval construction and in general preparation for war. All these misfortunes, if they occur, will be due to inefficient national leadership. Is our national leadership so vastly superior to that of any possible adversary that these three contingencies are utterly impossible? If the navy is both outpaced in preparation and surprised, it may lose command of the sea in a few days or even in a few hours; while invasion may follow in a few days, or a few weeks—who knows? In that eventuality, the finely tempered point of the cone, directed by the panic-stricken government and populace, will be hurrying from one threatened point to another; while the bulk of the cone will be fully employed in the effort to train itself, and in the suppression of revolution or of great risings in every great city.

It thus seems fairly evident that the national army—the bulk of the cone—should not only be organised, but highly trained, especially as regards the officers—of finely tempered steel throughout, in fact. An

army of such a nature may quite possibly be required within a few weeks of the outbreak of hostilities in South Africa, in America, in the near East, on the continent of Europe, or in the United Kingdom ; it is only in the case of the invasion of India that time might possibly be granted in which to "work up" efficiency.

But there seems to be rather a false conception abroad in Great Britain of the period in which the efficiency of an army can be "worked up." There are those—principally composed of men who know nothing whatsoever about the subject—who maintain that men are already trained soldiers if they can shoot ; others urge that at least six months' severe and continuous training under experienced officers is necessary ; while most educated soldiers will agree that, given the natural aptitude for war, the private soldier cannot be trained in less time than one year—many will hold out for at least two years, it depends so much on early education, and the hereditary instincts or the natural aptitude of a man. But even with thoroughly trained officers, non-commissioned officers, and privates, a newly formed force can only be rendered an efficient weapon with at least six months' mobilisation in which to weld the masses together, and it is probable that even this period is all too short.

But experienced officers cannot be trained in less than three to five years—in addition to an elementary course of at least two years in a military college ;

while staff officers require a further severe course of instruction during a period of two to three years.

The problem of how to obtain trained officers in sufficient numbers, both for the finely tempered point of the cone and for the bulk of it, is evidently a matter of supreme importance. Let us then consider the existing state of affairs as regards the officers of the land forces, the efforts which have, of late, been made to solve this problem, and the projected measures.

The present Secretary of State for War stated, on February 25th, 1907, in his speech on the Army Estimates, that there existed a deficiency on mobilisation of the regular army of 4000 officers, and in the projected national army of 6000, or about fifty per cent.

As regards the regular army, we must be pardoned if we revert again for a moment to the Boer War. Towards the end of that war, one of the disadvantages under which the British army laboured was the dearth of trained officers. Any man who could but barely read and write, and who possessed some slight pretensions to ordinary honesty and trustworthiness, could be almost certain of receiving a commission; if not in the regular army, at least in one of the numerous auxiliary corps which were raised. Though many excellent men were obtained, who ultimately developed into excellent officers, yet the majority were wholly unfitted to fill posts to which the smallest responsibility was attached. In this emer-

gency the officers of the regular army and the best of the colonial and auxiliary corps rose to the occasion. A large percentage of them cheerfully undertook each man the work of two or three. Day and night they slaved, whether on the "trek" or in their offices, seeking to uphold the honour and integrity of the empire. As a reward they were subjected to the captious criticism, and even abuse, of men who had never run a greater risk than that of a falling slate in a gale of wind.

Their very courage and disregard of life was held up against them as a reproach. The army as a whole, as is well known, became a scapegoat for the faults of others. As an immediate consequence, at the termination of the war, considerable numbers of the officers, including some of the most capable and brilliant in the army, retired. Some few of them also died or became incapacitated from overwork, wounds, or sickness contracted in the service of their country. The dearth of officers was now a source of obvious danger to the country, and it became necessary to increase the number of young officers entering the army.

The manner in which officers enter the regular army is somewhat complicated. A certain number of youths, who possess the ability, education, and energy to pass the entrance competitive examination, are put through a strict course of training and discipline at the military colleges at Sandhurst and Woolwich. In addition to these, those who cannot pass into the military colleges can obtain direct commissions

through the militia or yeomanry, provided they can pass the necessary competitive examination. It will not be denied by any officer who himself has entered the army through the auxiliary forces that it is a grave disadvantage to have missed the early training at the military colleges.

It will thus be seen that there were, broadly speaking, three methods by which the number of young officers entering the army could be increased. The first of these was to enlarge the establishment at the military colleges. The second was to lower the period of instruction at these colleges from two years to one, and thus double the output. The third was to simplify the examination for officers of the auxiliary forces.

The first method involved an increase of the available house room at the colleges, with a corresponding expenditure of money. A Royal Commission had emphatically declared against a one year's course at the military colleges, fixing the minimum period of instruction at two years. The disadvantages of the third method are obvious.

It was the second method which was, so far as Sandhurst was concerned, adopted by the government.

But this was not all. Officers still continued to resign their commissions in the army; and the influx of young officers, after every available corner both at Woolwich and Sandhurst had been filled up, was still too small. The government now resorted to another makeshift. About a year ago, in 1905, direct com-

missions in the cavalry¹ and Guards were offered to young gentlemen of means, to whom a course of discipline at the military universities might prove irksome, and who lacked the capacity to pass examinations. At the termination of one year's service these young gentlemen were required to pass some puerile examination.

Now every man knows that constant efforts have been made by leading soldiers to exclude political and social influence as a factor in the advancement of officers in the army ; they also know how extremely difficult is the accomplishment of this purpose. They also know that young gentlemen of means are usually possessed of social or political influence. Thoughtful soldiers foresee that, if similar expedients are often resorted to, there will be, a few years hence, two classes of officers, the one an educated and hard-working class, the other an uneducated, lazy, and inefficient class, supported, however, by powerful social and political influence. They also foresee that many nominations to the Staff College, appointments to the general staff, and professional preferment generally,

¹ This practice was, fortunately, quickly discontinued so far as the cavalry of the line was concerned, apparently on the initiative of cavalrymen themselves. It is, indeed, a military platitude to assert that cavalrymen should, if possible, be better educated than the officers of other branches of the services ; for they are the men who must obtain information of the enemy's movements and strength, and must discriminate between true and false information. They also, more often than others, must act on their own initiative, and without orders. An army of which the cavalry officers are ill-educated is at a grave disadvantage.

will go to the latter class, and that members of the former will languish throughout their lives in obscurity. If similar expedients are often resorted to in the future, it is to be feared that that "aristocracy of talent, independent of birth, influence, or means, which is absolutely indispensable for success in modern war"¹ will form a by no means prominent feature of the future general staff of the army.

The next method by which it was sought to solve this problem was so masterly yet simple that it seems quite absurd that it should never have occurred to any one before. It clearly reflects the highest credit on the Council of Imperial Defence, or the Cabinet, or whoever was responsible for it. If there are not enough officers for an army, it is evident that the army is too big for the number of officers. The army should, of course, be reduced.

This reduction has now been accomplished, and the beneficial result is immediately apparent. There are now plenty of officers for the regular army; the direct commissions have been stopped, and the examination for entrance into Sandhurst has been made more severe.² The army will now obtain a better-educated class of officer. We may also point incidentally to the economy effected, which doubtless will materially

¹ *Imperial Strategy*: "The General Staff." By the Military Correspondent of *The Times*.

² It is now, however, stated—February, 1907—that the available accommodation at Sandhurst is to be increased, and £250,000 has been set aside for the purpose.

strengthen the position of the Government. The reduction of the army has, it cannot be denied, killed several birds with one stone.

Captious critics may certainly be found who will say that it is inexpedient to reduce the regular army—the highly tempered point of the cone, which is already too small—until the auxiliary forces—the bulk of the cone—have been organised and trained.

But, it will be argued, the reduction of the army is but part and parcel of that national policy which seeks to prove to the whole world that the British people will not, in any conceivable circumstances, be guilty of that wickedness called war. The exponents of this peace policy will, we may be sure, receive their reward hereafter ; but have they then made arrangements to ensure—in case of national disaster—that the community as a whole shall similarly receive its recompense in the world to come ?

The projected measures for dealing with this problem are as follows. A reserve of officers, for both the regular and the national army, is to be established. The qualifications for admission to this reserve corps are (*a*) a year's attachment to a regular unit *à la suite*—which, it is explained, has been found sufficient on the Continent; (*b*) a certificate of military proficiency in a school cadet corps, followed by eight months' attachment to a regular unit; or, (*c*) certificates of proficiency both in a school and a university corps, followed by four months' attachment to a regular unit. These school and university cadet corps are,

moreover, to be formed into an officers' training corps, under the supervision of the General Staff.

In France and Germany the reserve of officers is certainly largely composed of those who have passed a certain examination, and who have, thereafter, served in a regular unit for one year. But these do not form fifty per cent of the officers of the active army and of the active reserve. The bulk of their officers, having passed a competitive examination and served for a year in the ranks of the active army, are trained for two or three years in a military college, and, thereafter, with the exception of the infantry, proceed to a technical school for one year. The training in the ranks of these continental nations is, moreover, a very different thing to that which the British reserve officer will undergo when attached to a regular unit. It is to be expected that a large number of these latter officers—who will doubtless spend an enjoyable time in a friendly regiment—will hardly display the capacity and scientific knowledge of war which is so requisite in modern warfare.

In the projected British army, which is few in numbers, and of which the national part, at least, is to receive little or no training until after the outbreak of hostilities, a corps of highly scientific officers of sufficient numerical strength is absolutely essential. For, otherwise, this army will be doomed to extermination whenever it meets continental troops in the field.

The criticism which was levelled at the scheme of reorganisation of the army by Mr. Arnold Forster, the

late War Minister, appears to be thoroughly justified. In the whole scheme, he declares, the Secretary of State for War has "apparently forgotten the one word—war." But then, in this feature, is this present scheme one particle different to any previous schemes which have ever been propounded by former Secretaries of State for War?

On the whole, we are probably warranted in the conclusion that the projected national army will prove to be useless, either as a national school of education or as a fighting force. All that can be said for it is, that it will be of more value than the present system of untrained and unorganised masses of militia, yeomen, and volunteers, who do not even possess obsolete artillery or transport. The fact that organisation is to be introduced is, indeed, a reform of no small significance. For the skeleton of a fighting force will, at least, exist; and, in the time of a terrible disaster, when the men of the country are driven to fight or tamely to face a worse alternative, the enrolment of all able-bodied men will be possible. Though the national army is not calculated to avert disaster, it may yet save the nation from utter annihilation. In the absence of any form of compulsion, the best has been made of a bad job, or, in the words of the Military Correspondent of *The Times*, the scheme is calculated "to make the best use of existing forces, and to leave the door invitingly open for future progress." It has been said that this attempt is the last gasp of the voluntary system. Each of these

gasps is of some years' duration; and it is sincerely to be hoped that the humanity of the neighbouring nations will not permit the death-bed to be rudely upset by an outburst of war.

There is, however, another reform which has been less widely advertised in the press, but which may prove to be of hardly less moment. Since the Boer War, regular soldiers, with the exception of those who live for amusement, have set themselves most earnestly to rectify their own shortcomings. They are no longer trained in the haphazard and inconsequential manner which was in vogue formerly. There is now on all sides a desire to learn and to practise assiduously the operations of war with as near an imitation as is permitted in this country to the stern realities of war. Soldiers have, in fact, accomplished what little they can, though that little is, compared with the great issues, small enough. The regular army of to-day would, nevertheless, but for one unfortunate circumstance, probably prove, if put to the test of war, infinitely more efficient than it was in 1899. The constant tinkering at the army by incapable hands is, however, fast reducing all commissioned ranks to a state of abject hopelessness. There is such a thing as the "military spirit"—which Clausewitz tells us is apt to disappear in peace, and which can only really be aroused by victory on the battlefield—without which an army, or a navy, for that matter, is helpless against an efficient foe. But the basis of this spirit exists in peace in every standing army, and the more it can be

cultivated in peace, the more it will display itself at the outbreak of hostilities, and even a slight and partial success will at once arouse it to full vigour. It is for this reason that generals are so anxious to draw "first blood," and it is for this reason that nations in arms are careful to inculcate pride in, and brook no insults levelled at, the national forces. It is this spirit which, in Great Britain, is termed "militarism," every effort being made by politicians and public to extinguish it and to check its possible growth.

The military spirit of the British army had, nevertheless, up to the time of the Boer War, thrived in the congenial soil of the tradition of past victories ; but since the Boer War, with its initial defeats, which the educated soldier by no means seeks to disguise from himself, this spirit has been maintained with greater difficulty. In former days the British army had a reputation throughout the world as a resolute, if small, body of warriors ; to-day, however, it is evidently rightly regarded by nations in arms as an obsolete weapon, recruited, trained, and organised under faulty principles, and, generally speaking, too insignificant to be worthy of much consideration.

The two things which are fatal to an army are a feeling of despondency, and one of unwarranted overconfidence. With the former, the military spirit cannot exist ; with the latter, it is a false spirit which gives way at the first shock. Of the British army of to-day, the ignorant officers are filled with a mis-

placed confidence based on the assumption that every Englishman is equal to three foreigners; while of the educated, some are despondent, and others a prey to dire misgivings. Educated officers commence to ask themselves certain questions to which the answers are only too apparent and unpleasant. Is it only the auxiliary forces who are unfitted to meet the troops of a nation in arms? Is the training of the regular army so very realistic and severe? Is the discipline stringent; the organisation perfect? Is the patriotism throughout all ranks above reproach; or is a mercenary spirit abroad? Is the education of the officers as scientific and uninterrupted as it might be? Are we all, from the highest to the lowest, animated by a spirit of absolute devotion to the true interests of king and country?

It is well to make these points clear, if only in the hope that the public may be brought to understand that an army is an organisation of men, with the characteristics, sentiments, susceptibilities, and foibles of men; that its fair fame is its most dearly prized possession; and that its strength lies in its spirit, its vitality, its moral, its inner consciousness, and in its untarnished reputation.

Is it not perfectly patent to every thoughtful man that, in the matter of officers alone, to say nothing of the rank and file, the so-called voluntary system, under which our land forces are at present recruited, has hopelessly broken down? Is it not clear that the system is faulty in principle, and that any attempt to

extend or amplify it can only result in further confusion and is foredoomed to failure? Let us note to what the projected reforms are calculated to lead: a small mercenary army, highly paid, but sinking lower day by day, not only in the estimation of the people and in that of the whole world, but in its own. A so-called national army of about 300,000 men, half organised, half trained, badly led, partly disciplined, and extremely expensive. It will be murder, pure and simple, to send such an army, until its officers have had at least three years' severe and continuous training, against the troops of a first-class nation in arms.

Is the nation content with such land forces, by means of which it cannot by any possibility hope to bring a war against any powerful adversary to a successful termination? Is it at all likely that, a few years hence, there will be found many men who are not simpletons who will engage to serve in such an army or to lead it; who will sacrifice their lives and their reputations, not so much for their country, but for the benefit of the many millions of able-bodied men who are too cowardly, too unpatriotic, or too ignorant to fight in defence of it? Armies of simpletons will not win success in modern war.

It is not a real nation in arms that is to be formed; it is but the semblance of one—an ass dressed in a lion's skin, devoutly hoping that its bray may be mistaken for a roar.

CHAPTER VI

THE FIGHTING CAPACITY OF THE BRITISH NATION

(continued)

National education and training—Patriotism and unity of purpose—National leadership—Reforms introduced since the Boer War—The Council of Imperial Defence—The General Staff—The Army Council—Espionage—Unemployed and unemployable—National progress—"Civilianism"—Nation of civilians an anachronism.

THOSE nations which maintain standing armies and navies consisting of but a small part of the people lack the vast educational establishments represented by the armed forces of the nation in arms. Except by the few men who represent the armed forces, the study of the deep science of war is disregarded, or regarded with contempt as a boorish and unintellectual pursuit. The immediate consequence is that the great mass of the people are ignorant of the very nature of war and of the necessities of it; the fighting man is regarded with ill-concealed disdain by the merely cultured man—a sentiment which is very often repaid with interest—and the ablest brains of the community, fully employed in the pursuit of their own interests or amusements, scorn to serve their country as men, and can by no means afford the time, even if they possessed the technical knowledge, for the scientific consideration of national problems.

Liberty denies the right of the government to control the schools ; the curriculum of education is therefore apparently directed in accordance with the personal predilections of the various head masters, the only check arising from the fact that the examinations for entrance into the universities dictate, to a certain extent, the subjects in which proficiency is required. But, whereas it is generally the clergyman, or man of peace, with a natural abhorrence for war, who not only directs education in the universities, but is everywhere considered the most desirable instructor of youth, so it is but natural that the chief effort should be directed to the production of the man of culture rather than the man of action, while the study of war and the inculcation of patriotism and discipline, the qualities which are vital to national efficiency, are neglected. Even in the Board Schools, it would appear that practical education is neglected in favour of "culture." History shows that the man of culture is not the equal of the man of action for war purposes, and that the merely cultured nation is helpless against a warlike nation. Let us also ask ourselves, does the British system of education, or that in vogue in a nation in arms, conduce the more to the practical progress of humanity ?

It will doubtless be remembered that the British people can hardly be credited with the display of a very high standard of patriotism, unity of purpose, or discipline in the Boer War. Politicians of high standing openly supported the enemy ; a member of

Parliament fought for the enemy; criticism and even abuse of British generals and British soldiers were indulged in with impunity; and not only was little or no effort made to check these evils at the time, but the political leaders of this hostile party afterwards received the support of the nation at the general election. The pro-Boer party as a whole was, indeed, granted a free hand to assist the Boers with unlimited encouragement, if not with money and more active help. The disadvantages under which British troops laboured in South Africa, owing to these national defects of unscientific national leadership, lack of patriotism, absence of national organisation and discipline, and an insufficient number of trained fighting men, can hardly be over-estimated. It may safely be asserted that a similar display against a nation in arms must prove fatal.

The fact that a certain number of the men of the nation were, and still are, prepared to give a portion of their time, however short, to the service of their country certainly argues that patriotism is not yet entirely dead; but compared with that which will assuredly be displayed by the men of a nation in arms, who are taught to give everything, even to their lives, for their country, it must be admitted that British patriotism is of a somewhat emasculated and anæmic type. That a lack of patriotism is due to ignorance of the nature of war cannot be denied; but neither can it be denied that ignorance in a nation as a whole, which automatically results in a

cessation of progress, is, if history speaks true, the one unpardonable offence a community can commit. Whether the people themselves or the national leaders are responsible for so unfortunate a state of affairs evidently merits the deepest consideration.

Where there exists so general and profound an ignorance of the nature of war, it is hardly to be expected that the leadership of the nation should be organised on scientific principles with a view to war ; and we thus see that the control of the nation is vested, nominally, in the people themselves, but, in reality, in the hands of political parties. With dissension in the supreme counsels of the nation, national unity of purpose, an essential to success in war, would seem to be impossible. The natural inference, therefore, is that the British national leadership must inevitably be unscientific. This inference receives support from the fact that the nation was entirely surprised by the outbreak of war with the Boers in 1899, and was caught quite unprepared. It appears to be only too evident that before the Boer War the national leaders had neglected to apply scientific thought to the defence problems which the British nation might be called on to solve ; but since that day the Council of Imperial Defence has been reconstituted, while the formation of a general staff has been inaugurated. But before we consider the value of these two reforms, it will be wise to seek out the reason for the failure at the time of the Boer War.

On the 9th May, 1900, the late Lord Salisbury, at that time Prime Minister, stated that "the defence of the country is not the business of the War Office or the government, but is the business of the people themselves." In these words the government, by the mouth of the Prime Minister, would appear to have definitely, though perhaps unknowingly, disclaimed all responsibility for lack of preparation for war and, consequently, for defeat.¹

Mr. Arnold Forster, the late Secretary of State for War, in his book, *The War Office, the Army, and the Empire*, also states that the people practically lead themselves: "The British Public," he says, "is now to all intents and purposes the king."

It seems evident that governments which cannot foresee war, cannot make preparation for war, cannot conduct war in accordance with the dictates of strategy, and which disclaim all responsibility in time of emergency, cannot be termed the national leader in any sense of the word. But with the reforms lately introduced it is possible that the system of leadership has now been placed upon a more satisfactory footing. Let us therefore examine into these reforms and endeavour to gauge their value.

As to the usefulness of the Council of Imperial Defence, if it consist of men trained to the study and

¹ Compare with Pitt's courageous assumption of responsibility at the time of the naval mutiny at Spithead. "I am willing," he said, "personally, to meet the accusation, considering myself as responsible for every measure, not only connected with finance, but with the general safety of the country."

solution of national problems, there can be no two opinions. This would hardly, however, appear to be the case. The Prime Minister for the time being appears to be both the President as well as the only permanent member of the Council. He is assisted by a permanent staff, which marshals facts, but does not, apparently, express opinions. The President has the right to call in, as temporary members and for consultation, such men as he thinks fit. The Council of Imperial Defence, it would appear, in reality resolves itself into an assemblage of Cabinet Ministers, with the power to call in extraneous assistance whenever it may be considered necessary or desirable.

If that be the case, it is a remarkable organisation ; and the principal object in its construction would seem to have been to ensure that the Council of Imperial Defence should never be in a position to lay down the law to, or dissent from the opinions of, the Cabinet on any matter whatsoever. From its formation, indeed, we may perhaps venture to infer that the chief purpose of the Council is what soldiers term "eyewash," that is, a little make-believe to throw dust in the eyes of an inspecting officer, who is, apparently, in this case in point, the British Public.

If we now seek to judge of the value of the Council by the published results of its deliberations, we find room for little but extreme amazement and pessimism. It will be remembered that the late Prime Minister, the President and member of the Council, dealt with the possibility of the invasion of this

country. Having, for purposes of illustration, selected a neighbouring nation as our supposititious opponent, he eliminated the whole of its navy. He then eliminated one-half of the British navy, and thereafter proved to his own entire satisfaction—and, apparently, to that of the Houses of Parliament—that the remaining half of the British navy would destroy with a terrible and fearful loss of life the hostile transport fleet while it was engaged in the very act of landing the hostile armies on our shores. Building his calculations, moreover, on false premises, he proved that continental powers lacked sufficient transport for the conveyance oversea of more than 70,000 men. Invasion of the British Islands was therefore clearly impossible. It may be safely asserted that few, if any, of the cadets at either Woolwich or Sandhurst would, after a few months' residence at either of those places, attempt the solution of any military problem in so unscientific a spirit.

It must surely be clear to all thoughtful men that, if the above solution of the problem of invasion was that which had been worked out after mature deliberation by the Council, that body is useless, and must remain useless so long as untrained men are masters of it. If, on the other hand, the solution, as stated in the House of Commons, was not that which had been arrived at by the Council of Imperial Defence, then it seems possible that the correct solution had been modified to allay public fear of invasion and to withdraw the attention of the people

from the burning question of army reform—in a word, “cooked” for party purposes. A Council of Imperial Defence which is intended to serve party interests is, none will deny, worse than useless.

Or there may be another explanation—that the conclusions arrived at by the Council were of such importance that they were on no account to be divulged. In this event the Council may, in spite of its peculiar construction, be of real value; and, in that case, we shall doubtless find other and still more momentous reforms initiated and carried through with a strong and fearless hand. But in view of the grave divergence of opinion on national strategy or policy which existed between the Prime Minister, the President of the Council, and Earl Roberts, who at one time was the principal expert member of it, optimism would seem to be misplaced. The efforts to reorganise the army, moreover, and the political conception of a nation in arms, by no means tend to support the belief that the Council of Imperial Defence, as at present constituted, is fitted to direct the nation either in war or in preparation for war. The present government has, indeed, through the Secretary of State for War, very frankly explained its mental attitude towards this problem of army reform. As the government has, presumably, drawn its inspiration from the Council of Imperial Defence, its expressed attitude is important. “We are very keenly conscious,” said the War Minister, “that the unsatisfactory state of the forces of the Crown is pro-

ducing a certain amount of unrest in the public mind (hear, hear); and if that unrest is not allayed the result will be an agitation for what may be unpopular at this moment, but what may become popular under changed circumstances, and what the government would regard as very disastrous—an organised movement for compulsion. Therefore, we came to the conclusion that our plan of reorganisation should be as thorough as possible; for the policy of thorough, we think, will tend to secure us against such a movement. It may take time, it may require the co-operation of successive political parties; but we think that if we should succeed in organising a really strong second line we should be throwing up the stoutest entrenchments against attacks in the interest of compulsion, however they might be devised.”¹

It will be seen that there is not one word in all this to show that the necessity, or otherwise, for compulsion has so much as been considered. The very thought of compulsion is, apparently, unpleasant to politicians of all parties, and is, for that reason alone, to be avoided at all costs. Can it be that the Council of Imperial Defence concurs in this view of the duties of the government of a nation? A writer in the daily press has indeed lately said that the nation will never be so foolish as to entrust the national leadership to the hands of politicians in time of war, but here the significance of scientific preparation is disregarded.

¹ *The Times*, 5th March, 1907. Speech of the Secretary of State for War, introducing the Territorial Army Bill.

It will be too late, on the outbreak of hostilities, to seek around for competent leaders ; the defeat of the nation will by that time be a foregone conclusion.

But it will be pointed out that of late years the British Foreign Office has removed most of the possible causes of friction between Great Britain and France, as well as between Great Britain and the United States ;¹ that it has brought about an *entente cordiale* with France, effected an alliance with Japan, and is even now engaged in the effort to remove the ill-will which has for so many years existed between Great Britain and Russia. It will be said, with good show of reason, that surely these facts argue the highest efficiency in the national leadership. It is not to be denied that British foreign policy has been successful almost beyond expectation ; but, on the other hand, it must be remarked that foreign policy is but one branch of national strategy, and that the acquirement of the goodwill and sympathy of other nations, though much to be desired, or even the formation of alliances, are in themselves quite useless unless accompanied by the preparation of adequate armed force to oppose to those nations which there is reason to suppose are hostile.

That the armed force of the British nation is totally inadequate to the requirements of the nation, and that little or no progress has been made since the Boer War, cannot be disputed. Lord Roberts, speaking in

¹ And, in so doing, it would appear to have aroused some slight friction between Great Britain and Canada.

the House of Lords on July 10th, 1905, said, "And I have no hesitation in stating that our armed forces, as a body, are as absolutely unfitted and unprepared for war as they were in 1899-1900." And, again, he stated at the Mansion House on the 1st August, 1905, "I feel certain that every soldier with any experience of war will support me when I say that it would be the height of folly for us to enter upon a campaign with a civilised power depending on an army constituted as ours is at the present time." A system of national leadership which neglects the armed forces can hardly be termed scientific.

But, again, it will be argued, a General Staff has been formed ; and surely this fact is a warrant that the national leadership will be conducted with more science in future.

The General Staff has been at work for a year or more ; and the value of its labour is, probably, by this time, known to every officer of the British army. Its work will, doubtless, still further improve as its members become habituated to working together. Of such promise is it,¹ in fact, that, but for three unfortunate circumstances, great hopes would exist that the national problems would, in the future, receive scientific consideration, and that the British people would never again slip unprepared and unknowingly

¹ The author appears in the Army List (March, 1907) as a member of the General Staff. But it must not, for that reason, be thought that he seeks to vaunt its work. He has had no share in it.

into a great war. These three circumstances are as follows. A general staff, or a branch of it, has not been formed for the navy ; and it is therefore difficult to see how, in the absence of an expert council of defence, the two branches of the armed forces can co-operate successfully in their preparation for, as well as in the operations of, war. Yet close co-operation is essential to victory. It is true that the Admiralty practically takes the place of a general staff, and that there is no guarantee of efficiency in a mere name. But the strength of the general staff of the more highly organised nation in arms lies in the facts that it wields the whole force, can dispose of the whole resources of the nation, and is untrammelled in its conduct of war. Is this likely to be the case with the British Admiralty ? Or is it the case, as some maintain, that in time of war the Admiralty, like the War Office, will be a mere puppet in the hands of political parties ? The system of national leadership cannot be too carefully organised. It is the General Staff of trained experts—with subordinate departments for foreign, naval, military, colonial, and home affairs—which should be responsible, so far as preparation for war and the conduct of war are concerned, for every branch of national strategy. A faulty organisation must lead, inevitably, to both extravagance and inefficiency. There are with us, for instance, naval, military, and foreign office intelligence departments, under different heads. Can there be any doubt that the same work is often done three times over, and

that much important work is left undone as being beyond the province of any one of these three? They now talk of a commercial intelligence, which, doubtless, will be placed under another head.

The second circumstance is that the General Staff, like the Council of Imperial Defence, is controlled by the political party in power for the time being. It may arrive at correct conclusions, but that is no guarantee that its recommendations will be accepted, or that false solutions, dictated by the political exigencies of the moment, and credited to the General Staff,¹ may not be foisted on the public. There is not a single British officer who has not read and laughed—laughed with exceeding bitterness of spirit—at the statements made by “responsible politicians,” from time to time, in both Houses of Parliament, statements which cunningly distort facts, or which are even glaringly and notoriously untrue, statements which invariably elicit a “hear, hear” from the general assemblage! It is, none will deny, a principal feature of parliamentary control of the army.

The third circumstance is that the Secretary of State for War, in his memorandum, lays great stress on the fact that the General Staff must not interfere

¹ It is said, for instance, that the General Staff is responsible for the new scheme of army reorganisation. It is impossible to believe such a statement—unless, that is, the General staff were ordered to draw up a scheme on the basis of voluntary service only. In that case, it has produced a marvel of ingenuity. It would, however, be interesting to know how many of the members of the General Staff advocate compulsory universal service.

in administrative matters. "If they," he writes, "prove themselves to be pedantic theorists, if they get out of touch with the army, or if they exercise their authority by interfering in the details of administrative business for which others are responsible, the failure of the present attempt to form a general staff is certain."

What, exactly, does this expression "administrative business" mean to convey? Does it include problems connected with national efficiency for war purposes, such as that of the number of fighting men required and the means by which they are to be obtained? If so, then it also includes the vital question of universal service and a national training to arms. If the consideration of such problems is to be excluded from the province of general staff work; if, in fact, the General Staff as a body is expected to think, not imperially, but parochially, then, indeed, the General Staff might just as well not exist. The apportionment of work to the General Staff tends, unfortunately, to show that these fears may be justified; for no branch of it is detailed to the consideration of the national defence problem as a whole. One branch deals with offensive operations, while another is responsible for "home defence." It is the Council of Imperial Defence, apparently, which is to consider the problem as a whole.

If, however, our fears are groundless, then in the formation of a general staff we see a real reform, the first step on the road to efficiency.

There is yet another reform. The Commander-in-Chief, in name, of former years has been replaced by an Army Council, apparently also in name only. A civilian member of the dominant political party, wrongly termed the Secretary of State for *War*, or the *War* Minister, is still, as of yore, the real Commander-in-Chief.

It will be seen that the British system of national leadership is complicated in the extreme; and that any expectation that the nation will be scientifically directed, either in the struggle for national existence, in preparation for, or in the conduct of, hostilities, is entirely unwarranted. But there is yet more evidence which tends to show that the national leadership is still more fatally inefficient than appears on the surface.

According to the Anglo-Saxon conception of liberty, the freedom of the individual, provided he refrain from the infringement of the letter of the law, is absolute. There is no reason to suppose that the British people will submit themselves to the provisions of martial law until the fact is patent to all that the nation is within measurable distance of destruction—when, in a word, it will be too late. Enemy's spies will be able to work unchecked and unhampered; but this fact is entirely without significance to an untaught people, though it is recognised by all educated soldiers and sailors that it is, in itself, sufficient to render secrecy, and therefore victory, whether on land or sea, a matter of extreme improbability.

With the freedom of the press, as it exists in Great Britain, the last hope of secrecy disappears. No government has yet made the smallest attempt to face this question.

Closely connected with the matter of espionage is the alien problem and that of the unemployed, as well as of the mass of persons "on the verge of starvation." The number of the latter in Great Britain has been computed by a politician—who may, however, have made the assertion for party purposes—at thirteen millions, or about one-quarter of the population of the British Islands. No attempt has been made by any government to deal scientifically with this problem, which, if left unsolved, must almost inevitably prove disastrous in time of war. It will not be denied that the problem must always be one of extreme difficulty ; but that it is insoluble, or that it can be solved by the methods adopted, cannot be admitted. The right of compulsion by the state being denied, no effort is made to oblige the unemployable class to work ; they are left entirely to their own devices ; they increase in power, as is but natural ; and they daily become an increasing burden on the community and a danger to the state. At the present time there would seem to be a vast number of able-bodied men who are supported by the community, together with a large organisation—conducted in certain places, at least, with the utmost extravagance—for their so-called "relief." There is, needless to say, no money available for such trifles as military efficiency, or for the formation of a

gold reserve for use in war ;¹ it is all required for the support of those who refuse to work, and who cannot be compelled to work lest the sacred principle of liberty be infringed. The fact is quite disregarded that this huge mass of unemployed and unemployable is a serious menace to the whole community. Such a mass constitutes ideal soil for the machinations of hostile agitators or spies ; for starving men are always prone to sedition and revolution.

The mere existence of a large and undisciplined mass of the people on the verge of starvation is the surest sign of bad leadership. Such a state of affairs is the almost certain precursor of war or revolution, or, more generally, both. It has, consequently, been the first concern of the great leaders of history to mitigate the misery of the poverty-stricken classes by every means in their power, except that of supporting them in idleness at the public expense. The usual method has been to employ the starving on the construction of vast national edifices, or to get rid of them by an organised system of emigration and colonisation. Thus we see James I of England undertake the "colonisation of Ulster," and Crom-

¹ No money is available, for instance, with which to furnish bath-rooms, sufficient lecture-hall, library, or reading-room accommodation, or even modern lighting arrangements, to the Royal Military College at Sandhurst. The state of affairs in these matters is such that it would not, for one instant, be tolerated in any school, private or public, throughout the country. And yet, if men only knew it, their security, and that of their mothers, wives, and daughters, may, in the near future, depend on the instruction which has been given at this establishment.

well following in his footsteps. But before colonisation can be utilised, it is necessary to obtain colonies ; and hence it is necessary to wrest territory from other nations ; and hence, again, armed forces are necessary. Thus we see that the problem of the starving has often been solved by the formation of a national army, followed by an aggressive war. It was a method commonly adopted by the ancients ; while, as has been shown, there is good reason to believe that many of the wars and revolutions of mediæval and modern times have been due to the same cause. But the mere formation of a national army is, in itself, calculated to give a partial solution of this problem. For the forces of anarchy are at least brought under control, trained to discipline, economy, and frugality ; they will be satisfied with less, and are less likely to rise in revolt. With a national organisation, moreover, colonisation and emigration become simplified. In Germany the problem appears to have been partly solved by a system of state-aided and compulsory insurance for old age, sickness, or accident.

But in Great Britain, in this matter as in everything else, the amelioration of the lot of the starving is left to private enterprise or the initiative of philanthropic societies, or is dealt with in the fatal manner already mentioned. It is now the employer who must insure his *employés*. The system is hardly calculated to teach thrift to the working classes.

The whole condition of the British people, and the failure even to attempt adequate reform in any point

of importance, argues—and this will be admitted by every unprejudiced observer, and is doubtless well known to the general staffs of every nation in arms in the world—an entire absence of national leadership, scientific or otherwise. And yet about seventy-five per cent of the chances of success in the struggle for national existence depend—if Napoleon is correct, and if we are justified in applying his principle to nations—on leadership.

The modern nation of civilians appears to be, like its prototype, lacking in leadership and in the martial qualities, that is, in force, both moral and physical. Of all the systems of national leadership, that which is termed “responsible government” is, perhaps, for purposes of war the worst ; its real name would seem to be “irresponsible government.” For everybody shirks responsibility ; the party government awaits a “mandate” from the people, while the people are hopelessly confused by the conflicting, prejudiced, and unscientific views of the various political parties. The political leaders are certainly trained in the same school ; but it is the school of oratory, which may, perhaps, be defined as the art of cajoling the ignorant. It is the worst possible training for a leader of men. Rounded periods do not win wars. The Philippics of Demosthenes proved quite powerless against the phalanx of Philip of Macedon. The history of Athens affords strong presumptive evidence that party government must, in the end, lead almost inevitably to defeat in war and to the destruction of a

nation ; and the Athenians were more fortunate than the British, inasmuch as, under the law of ostracism, they were able in time of emergency to banish from the country the leader of the opposition. The British nation appears to have copied very closely the Athenian system of leadership by means of trained orators ; copied the nation which lost its empire and its independence in the most foolish manner conceivable ; copied more especially the Athenian hatred of discipline and military efficiency, which are now known by the name of "militarism." If the regular army finally develops into an army of mercenaries, then indeed will the nation be within sight of "militarism" ; for mercenaries amongst a civil population are wolves amongst sheep. Is it not a most remarkable thing that a nation, in its fear of "militarism," should adopt the very best means to ensure its ultimate introduction ? Militarism is the rule of the mercenary, or exasperated soldier ; it is the outcome of anarchy, which is one of the first results of defeat or revolution, which again are the direct results of military inefficiency and unscientific leadership. It appears to be in full swing in Russia, where the administration is now carried on by means of courts-martial. We have numerous examples of it in ancient history, as well as in the times of Cromwell and Napoleon. Military efficiency, on the other hand, is the antithesis of militarism ; it avoids war, or wins victory.

There are many men who believe that the British nation is gradually—some say rapidly—falling be-

hind in almost every aspect of national life, and that the people are sinking both mentally and physically below the level of the neighbouring nations. It cannot be denied that there is some little justification for so pessimistic an opinion ; for a comparison of the British people with the Romans in the period of their decadence, with the French prior to the great revolution, or with the Prussians before Jena, is by no means reassuring.¹

There are not lacking signs, moreover, which tend to show that the British nation is voluntarily abdicating the position it has so long held in the forefront of progress. A British statesman has practically warned Russia that any attempt to construct railways in Afghanistan will be regarded as a menace. British interests, in other words, demand that the Afghans should for ever be kept in a condition of comparative barbarism ! Such a view is hardly consistent with the conception that the British race is fulfilling a great mission in the world as a civilising agency.

Improved means of communication are, moreover, generally regarded as a sign of progress. And yet the British people have steadily set their face against the construction of the Channel Tunnel. The disagreeable feature in both these cases is that the motive is timidity. Fear, which is due to the innate conviction of unreadiness for war, is certainly a bar to progress.

¹ Such comparisons have been drawn in *Imperial Strategy*—1806 and 1906—a *Parallel*, by the Military Correspondent of *The Times* ; and in *The Decline and Fall of the British Empire*.

It will, however, be pointed out that the construction of the Channel Tunnel has been opposed on military grounds, and that most leading British soldiers and sailors have been determined opponents of it. It is true, and the opposition is, from a military point of view, perfectly justified. For such a tunnel will constitute a door into England, by means of which the invasion of the country may become feasible in spite of British supremacy at sea. In view of the perfect freedom accorded to the individual, the absence of registration of, and police supervision over, aliens, it is beyond question the case that the attempt to seize the British outlet to the tunnel would offer a considerable prospect of success. If the British people intend to entrust their security to a mercenary, or not too highly disciplined, voluntary army, their fears are reasonable, and they will be foolhardy if they permit the construction of this door to the country. It will, moreover, be a useless waste of money, for the tunnel will assuredly be destroyed in the first moment of panic. If, however, they intend to organise as a modern nation in arms, their armies composed of the whole manhood of the country, they will have nothing to fear; for not only will this door to the country be jealously guarded by men whose discipline at all times will be above suspicion, but aliens will be registered, under surveillance, denied the right to carry arms, and a *coup de main* will be practically impossible.

But there is another point of view. If the antici-

pation be true that Great Britain must expect to join with France in the near future to check the aggrandisement of the German power, then the Channel Tunnel will certainly prove to be a most valuable means by which effective co-operation between the two nations can be secured. For Great Britain will be able to assist on land even before her fleet has established its supremacy at sea. And if her fleet lose command of the sea, she may yet avert invasion by a blow, in conjunction with the French, at the vital point of Germany. The food supply of the British Islands will, moreover, be assured. The construction of the tunnel will, in fact, if the British people propose to introduce military efficiency, be a wise measure of preparation in view of possible eventualities. Its existence might quite possibly be the decisive factor in the war ; while, on the other hand, the fact that it had not been constructed might, in the end, prove fatal to the British nation. Progress is generally the safer as well as the bolder course to adopt ; but an inefficient nation can hardly venture to afford such a luxury as true progress. There are many more strategical problems, involving national progress, which demand consideration by an expert general staff, composed of both seamen and soldiers as well as of engineers and men of business. Is it not desirable, for instance, that a central arsenal, both naval and military, should be constructed in the neighbourhood of Liverpool ? Some conspicuous advantages can be claimed, on general grounds, for

the suggestion. It would lie at the most central point of the United Kingdom; it would possess outlets to the open sea, both to the north and to the south, and the blockade of the fleets based on it would demand an overpowering hostile force. If, in conjunction with such an arsenal, a canal could be constructed from Edinburgh to Glasgow, its value would be materially enhanced. Its defence would be comparatively simple; it would inexorably draw a hostile invading army away from London, or oblige the enemy to separate his forces; and it could only really fall before an attack by overwhelming forces both land and sea. It would be situated in the neighbourhood of the great manufacturing cities, and would be calculated to bring the English people into closer connexion with the Irish. If, in addition, an Irish tunnel is feasible, is it not probable that the Irish question might be finally settled, and the Irish people, once for all, brought to regard themselves as an integral part of the British nation? The expense of the undertaking would undoubtedly be enormous; but, on the other hand, would not the whole bulk of the passenger trade, between North America and Europe, pass through Ireland and England? Great harbours and centres of industry would quickly spring up on the west coast of Ireland, followed by a vast increase of trade and wealth; and the rebellious instincts of the Irish people must certainly give way before welfare and prosperity. And, moreover, the construction of such vast works, if combined with

universal training and national organisation, must assuredly settle the problem of the unemployed and unemployable, for the time being at least. "Wild-cat schemes" they will be called. But is any scheme impossible, then, before it has so much as received scientific consideration ?

Has a branch of the General Staff yet been formed for the consideration of the probable effect of aerial navigation on war ? If the nation is content with its present inefficiency, it will probably prefer to let this matter rest until it becomes a matter of urgency, and will then, doubtless, strain every nerve to check experiment and invention lest its insular position should be threatened. Such timorous conduct must inevitably bring the British name into contempt throughout the whole world, even amongst the subject races of the British Empire. And so it is that fear leads quite naturally to cessation of progress and to destruction. In spite of the rough warning conveyed by the Boer War and the lessons taught by the war in the Far East, the nation as a whole appears to be no better qualified to win success in the struggle for existence than it was in 1899.

In the five years which have elapsed since the Boer War something has, however, been accomplished. A large section of the people is apprehensive of the future of the nation, and loudly demands some form of universal service and national education ; a still larger section is slightly troubled in mind ; certain organs of the press devote all their efforts to the

awakening of the people. A Secretary of State for War has at last openly avowed his desire to popularise the idea of a nation in arms—though not, it is to be feared, in the accepted sense of the expression—he has actually drawn a distinction between “militarism” and military efficiency; he is attempting to introduce a system of national organisation, for which, let us hope, his name will go down to posterity; and lastly, he has, apparently—monstrous phenomenon that it is!—shown no little sympathy with the foibles as with the aspirations of soldiers.¹ It is something, if not very much; but, in the meanwhile, time draws on, the years pass; and how much more leisure will be granted to the British people in which to introduce efficiency? A possible adversary, whose hostility the British people had reason to apprehend, has been temporarily isolated, while Great Britain has formed many friendships with other nations. British diplomacy has, in fact, been masterly. But, in the meanwhile, the possible adversary is evidently straining every nerve in preparation for hostilities, while British preparation has been, and is, conspicuous by its absence. The result will be, unless adequate measures are adopted in time, that, at the decisive moment, the outbreak of hostilities, Great Britain will find that, having provoked the enmity of the adversary to fever heat, she lacks the force with which to strike, must hand over the initiative to her

¹ It has been said, however, that he does so with “his tongue in his cheek.”

enemy, and must content herself with a passive defensive. Her friends will then probably fall away from her — they always do — they will have their own interests to consider. The same method has been adopted as that which so nearly proved fatal against the Boers, the false conception which believes that a hostile nation can be induced to forego its ambitions by means of diplomatic representation and wordy provocation. It is the way of the orator.

It will not be denied by any educated soldier or sailor that Great Britain as a machine of war cannot bear comparison with even the most indifferently organised nation in arms ; and we are driven to the conclusion that the nation is unfitted to wage war, whether on the land or sea, with any prospect of ultimate success.

“Civilianism,” if we may use the expression, is, if history speaks true, an undoubted sign of degeneracy ; for it really means that the men of a nation are too unpatriotic, too ignorant, or too cowardly—one of the three—to fight for their country, their property, or their women-folk and children. Such a nation can only, like the immortal Mrs. Easy, sit with hands folded in the lap awaiting the millennium. It is quite unable to make preparation for an inevitable war ; it can “descry war lowering from the Peloponnesus”—sometimes—and proceeds to reduce its army and navy. A nation of such a type can no more hope to win and retain command of the sea than it can hope to win and retain anything else that requires manliness. For

supremacy on the sea can only be finally assured by offensive blows struck at the heart of an enemy, or at least by the destruction of his naval arsenals. But the conception of a nation of civilians striking "incessantly and remorselessly" at a nation in arms is as absurd as that of a flock of sheep striking at a pack of wolves.

It is only within the past hundred years that modern history has commenced ; a new type of nation has sprung into being—the scientific nation in arms, the machine of war, a thing evolved in the struggle to exist. Without education, science in leadership, self-restraint, or organisation, a nation of civilians of to-day, like the Poles in the eighteenth century, is obsolete—an anachronism, a mediæval nation amongst modern nations, an earthenware pot jostling iron pots.

Japan has given us an example of a perfected machine of war. Though all nations in arms have by no means attained a similar state of perfection, yet they one and all seek, more or less, to approximate to similar military ideals. A very slight superiority in the national machine—a more fervid patriotism, a sterner discipline, a better organisation, greater individuality, more efficient leadership and education—carries with it in the aggregate a superiority of force so vast that, from the very outset, victory over an inefficient nation is practically assured. As the Military Correspondent of *The Times* writes : "Is there, then, any system of war, or new method of tactics, more

suited to our special circumstances, and capable of rising superior to the momentum represented by the weight multiplied by the intelligence of the nation in arms? Our judgment is that there is none, and that every other and necessarily inferior conception of war must go down before that which demands everything, takes everything, and gives everything when war arrives.

"From this brief study of the nature of modern war the inexorable conclusion is reached that a power which is or becomes continental, and has a great military empire at its gates, must bow to the universal law, meet like with like, and organise national war or perish."¹

Though the great nations of the world, with the exception of the United States,² have all organised themselves as machines of war, Great Britain is yet content to trust implicitly to the old, obsolete, and happy-go-lucky methods of the dead past. General Von der Goltz, in *The Nation in Arms*, has attributed the disaster to the Prussians in 1806 to the "sickly-artistic conception of war" which then prevailed, and which was dashed to pieces by the advent of Napoleon. Is it not the case that this sickly-artistic or sentimental conception has taken a firm hold of the British nation?

¹ *Imperial Strategy: "Modern War."* By the Military Correspondent of *The Times*.

² There is some excuse for the United States, which is separated by great distances from nations in arms. It may yet find, however, in the near future, that its confidence in this safeguard is misplaced.

It is impossible, when two combatants are machines of war, to forecast the issue, to say definitely that this one or that will win ; we may only, prior to the delivery of the first blow, gauge the prospects of ultimate success by the known qualities and resources of the antagonists. When, however, one is a nation of an obsolete type, and the other is a highly organised machine of war, it is not difficult to foresee the almost inevitable outcome ; for science cannot, in the end, be overthrown by incompetence.

CHAPTER VII

THE PROBABLE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS IN A SINGLE-HANDED CONTEST BETWEEN GREAT BRITAIN AND A NATION IN ARMS WITHIN STRIKING DISTANCE OF THE UNITED KINGDOM

Vital, decisive, and vulnerable points—Adversary holds initiative—His preparatory operations—The first blow—Internal condition of Great Britain—Chances of the success of the British navy—Naval reserves—Scientific attainments of fighting men of nation in arms and nation of civilians—Defeat of British navy probable.

WE have seen that a comparison of Great Britain as a machine of war with a nation in arms is calculated to induce a feeling of extreme pessimism. We are driven to the conclusion that Great Britain will, unless adequate reforms are introduced in time, almost inevitably succumb before the onset of a nation in arms. But, the reader will doubtless exclaim, there is, after all, the British navy, which is fortunately still in existence! And he will, perhaps, add, does defeat necessarily involve destruction? Is it not possible that Great Britain may escape the consequences of her unreadiness by the payment of a comparatively small indemnity? Will not neutral nations intervene to save Great Britain? If that be so, then any reform which is calculated to infringe the British principle of

liberty may prove to be more unpleasant and irksome to the British people than mere defeat.

We can thus hardly be accused of waste of effort and time if we endeavour to forecast the course of events in a struggle between Great Britain and a nation in arms. But let us attempt to base our anticipations on the situation as it probably will be, and not as we hope it may be. Let us have due regard to the principle of success in war ; let us clearly recognise the disadvantages under which the British people must labour in the conduct of war ; and let us grasp the fact that preparation for war, scientific or otherwise, on the part of Great Britain appears to be, judging by past and present efforts, quite impossible. Let us boldly face the possibility that a hostile and unscrupulous nation in arms has decided that Great Britain and the British Empire is a bar to its further progress, prosperity, or aggrandisement, and has already commenced preparation for war. Such a nation, directed by the scientist, will hold the initiative and will assuredly be the first to strike. As a first step, therefore, in our forecast, it is necessary to ascertain which are the vital, the decisive, and the vulnerable points of the British Empire and of her possible enemies, in order that we may seek to fathom the methods by which the enemy will endeavour to effect his object and the points at which he will strike, as well as to understand the points at which Great Britain must strike if she would hope for ultimate victory.

We are, perhaps, justified in the assertion—taking

into consideration Colonel Henderson's dictum that the horrors of war must be brought home to a people before it will offer its submission—that the vital point of a nation is that which is the source of its energy, the nerve centre, so to speak, which if pierced, or affected by any cause, such as revolution, must break the national spirit, and temporarily or permanently incapacitate the nation from further effort. The vital point of a nation of necessity lies in the home territory, the source of its power and the seat of its government, as well as in the arsenals from which the armed forces are supplied. But vital points may equally, if the nation is not self-supporting, lie outside the home territories. A nation guards its vitals by means of armed forces; and before a fatal blow can be struck those armed forces must be destroyed.

The vital point of the British Empire lies, as is perfectly evident, in the British Islands, or probably, in England, in the great manufacturing and commercial cities—possibly in London itself. But the welfare of the British people is dependent on commerce; and the destruction of British commerce would almost certainly prove to be a fatal blow. And, again, the prosperity of the British people is bound up with the possession of India; and the loss of that dependency, which would assuredly be but the precursor of a vast loss of wealth, of widespread misery and poverty in the British Islands, and, consequently, of the loss of power to maintain the armaments by means of which the vital point and the commerce of the country are

guarded, will probably prove fatal. Or the loss of Canada must result in a loss of prestige. A loss of prestige would probably result in the disruption of the empire, which might again lead to the loss of wealth and the power to defend the commerce and the nerve centre of the nation. It seems probable that the loss of either South Africa, Australia, or New Zealand would lead to similar results. But it is not necessarily the case; for it must be remembered that the loss of the American colonies in the eighteenth century by no means reduced the British nation to impotence.

As in the case of the Spanish Empire, so in the case of the British, a permanent loss of the sea communications, as a whole, would certainly involve, not only the loss of the commerce, but the loss of the colonies and great dependencies—so true is Napoleon's dictum that "the secret of war lies in the communications." And, moreover, before a hostile power, with the exception of Russia and the United States, can strike at a vital point of Great Britain, it must first seize possession of the oversea communications between itself and Great Britain. We may therefore say that these sea communications constitute a decisive point, the possession of which by either combatant will grant an inestimable advantage, the power to deliver—if it possesses the force with which to strike—a fatal blow at a vital point.

The localities where the communications of the empire pass overland in the neighbourhood of possibly

hostile nations are, obviously, vulnerable points. Thus the loss of Egypt and the Suez Canal, which might possibly result in the loss of India and the disruption of the empire, is a vulnerable point, inasmuch as it lies open to the attack overland of the Turks or the Abyssinians. The same is true of Canada, which is open to attack from the United States. The same may be said of South Africa, unless the Boers voluntarily cast in their lot with the British Empire.

As regards Germany, the vital point lies in the home territories and in the great arsenals. In a war between Great Britain and Germany, the decisive point lies in the oversea communications between the two countries ; while the most vulnerable point of Germany, if vulnerable it can be termed, is the Kiel Canal. The German colonies are hardly of sufficient importance to be taken into consideration.

In a war between Great Britain and France, the vital point of France lies in the home territory ; the decisive point in the oversea communications between the two countries ; the most vulnerable point, the French oversea colonies and the sea communications between the mother country and those colonies.

In a war between Great Britain and Russia, the vital points lie in India and Russia respectively ; decisive points on the Indian frontier, the Dardanelles, Persia, and Afghanistan, according as to which nation assumes the offensive ; while there is no vulnerable point open to British attack under present conditions, except, perhaps, the state of internal unrest in Russia itself.

In a war between Great Britain and the United States, the great commercial and manufacturing cities on the eastern seaboard would probably prove to be vital points of the latter ; the decisive point would lie in the sea communications between the two countries, possibly in those between the United States and the British West India Islands, and on the Canadian frontier ; a vulnerable point would lie in every undefended American frontier city, a threat at which would be calculated to hamper the government, and to oblige it to withdraw force away from the decisive points.

In the event of war between Germany and France, the vital points lie in the respective countries, and in the arsenals which constitute the bases of their armed forces ; decisive points lie in the frontier fortresses which block the main lines of communication between the two countries, or in Belgium or Switzerland, through which countries these lines of fortresses can be turned. These nations have, apparently, no vulnerable points against which threats would be effective. If, however, Great Britain were allied with either nation, her naval power would at once render the hostile seaboard a vulnerable point, provided she possessed a land force of sufficient strength to render a threat effective and to oblige the enemy to detach considerable forces of his first line away from the decisive point. Under present conditions there can be no doubt that if one of these nations became involved in war with the other allied to Great Britain,

it would seek to strike down its continental adversary before Great Britain was in a position to assist on land. If that could be accomplished, it would then turn its whole attention to Great Britain.

Let us now turn to the consideration of the probable sequence of events in a war between Great Britain and a nation in arms within striking distance of the United Kingdom.

Great Britain is the centre of a vast and wealthy empire. Like all rich and powerful communities—the Persian and Roman Empires, for instance—she does not covet increase of territory or of wealth ; her ambition is satisfied ; she merely desires to retain that which she possesses ; and the one vital national necessity which could induce her to force war on a neighbour would be the danger of attack. The initiative therefore, at the present, lies with any other nation which may covet Great Britain's possessions or wealth, or which is impelled by some vital national necessity to the attempt to strike down the British Empire.

Nations in arms do not go to war without mature consideration and methodical preparation. If, therefore, a nation in arms has already commenced, or is about to commence, preparation for war against Great Britain, its operations will be conducted as follows :—

Its leaders will seek to put into effect the principle of the science of war—the application of overpowering force at a vital point of the enemy. They will assuredly adopt the methods which have been adopted

by all the great leaders of history—they will threaten the vulnerable points of the British Empire, either with their own forces or by means of allies, and then, suddenly, they will concentrate their whole available force at the decisive point, with a view to gaining command of the narrow seas, the ultimate object being the invasion or starvation of the United Kingdom. Russia and the United States, on the other hand, would strike direct on land at India or Canada ; though it is certain that each would also endeavour to interrupt the sea communications between Great Britain and the selected objective. Or it might well be that the United States would seek to exclude Canada from the struggle ; and, with that object in view, would be content to take the British West India Islands as her ultimate objective, and the command of the sea between herself and these islands as her immediate objective. Her course of action would, in fact, depend on whether her quarrel lay with Great Britain or with Canada.

As a means to its end, a nation in arms will commence secret and methodical preparation—France or Germany with a view to gaining command of the narrow seas, Russia with a view to the conquest of India.

Combined with this secret preparation efforts will be made to weaken Great Britain, to lull the suspicions of the people, but to rouse causes of dissension between Great Britain and her colonies or allies, if it can be accomplished stealthily.

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As the decisive moment approaches, efforts will be made to form an alliance with a nation which can threaten or attack some vulnerable point of the British Empire, and to accentuate discord in the United Kingdom itself.

At the opportune moment—that is, at the time when the greatest preponderance of force which can justly be expected has been established—the time will arrive for the delivery of the blow.

If successful, the first blow will be struck by which a nation in arms will hope to establish temporary supremacy at the decisive point ; while, at the same time, every resource of diplomacy will be employed to cast the onus of war on Great Britain.

The nation in arms will strain every nerve, and employ its whole resources of whatever nature, to convert temporary into permanent supremacy.

It is quite possible that a nation in arms which has almost completed its preparations will not await the psychological moment at which both diplomacy and preparation can be in complete readiness, but, presuming on Great Britain's notoriously unscientific national leadership and her habitual unreadiness for war, will prefer to take advantage of any opportunity which may offer. For the nation in arms, which is always in a state of comparative readiness for war, will not fail to recognise the enormous advantages to be gained by the establishment of initial superiority at the decisive point ; its leaders will rest confident that, with their highly organised system and the

whole national force immediately available, compared with the lack of organisation, discipline, and leadership in Great Britain, a temporary superiority will probably become more firmly established day by day. It by no means follows, for instance, that Germany will wait until 1920, if by secretly hastening her preparations she can accomplish the surprise of the British, or if she can catch the British fleet at a disadvantage.

The people of Great Britain, together with, apparently, the national leaders, consider that any suggestion to the effect that the British navy is liable to destruction by superior force is not only idle and foolish pessimism, but a direct insult to the navy. These point to the vast size and number of the ships, to the gallantry and devotion of the sailors ; but they forget that such things alone never yet won victory on the sea. They forget that vast strength in any one thing, such as armament, or numbers, or *matériel*, is apt to lead to an entirely misplaced confidence, and so quite naturally to defeat. They forget that in time of war the exact position of every ship of war and the movements, possibly even the intended movements, of the British fleets will be advertised to the enemy, not only by a host of spies, but by the unguarded speeches of politicians fully reported in the daily press. They are inclined to put implicit faith in their wealth ; and they take no count of the science of strategy, or of the measures which strategy adopts to achieve its ends. They cannot appreciate

the importance of scientific leadership and preparation, the constant weakening of the enemy, the feints, the false attacks, the false information, secrecy, rapidity, and surprise ; yet all these are, as we have seen, of intense significance in war. The scientific application of force is appropriate, as we have seen, to national strategy as well as to the strategy of the theatre of hostilities or to the tactics of the battlefield, and it brings victory, even against overwhelming odds, not only within the bounds of possibility, but, if the enemy be unscientific in his methods, within the bounds of probability. There are a thousand and one trifling details of preparation which are forgotten by the unscientific nation, and which are only recalled to memory after the outbreak of hostilities, when too late. The mere admiral or general, notwithstanding his science, the mere courage and devotion of the sailor and soldier, the mere strength of *matériel* and armament, are, in modern times, quite helpless to avert disaster if the nation as a whole be unscientific in its methods. In view of the strict economy exercised by nations in arms, and in view of the excessive cost of British armaments and of the extravagance and love of luxury of the British people, it seems beyond question that a nation in arms which has definitely decided to try conclusions with Great Britain will be able, under present circumstances, in a comparatively short term of years, to prepare a naval force nearly equal, if not superior, to that possessed by Great Britain. Superiority in national leadership may then be trusted to ensure victory.

It is the first blow which is pregnant with victory or defeat. Even as this first blow—which, more than any other operation of war, demands scientific leadership, secrecy, rapidity, and quick decision—is impossible to Great Britain, so, it would seem, is the avoidance of such a blow. For bad leadership will always grant unrivalled opportunities to an expert and unscrupulous opponent; the danger is never foreseen, and the vital point is always left unguarded at the critical moment. The blow falls like a bolt from the blue; vast but unready resources merely serve to confuse the untrained national leaders; and hysterical clamour and anarchy, in place of calm and steadfast resolution, grant further opportunities to a watchful and scientific foe. Demoralisation spreads with startling rapidity, not only through all classes of society, but through the armed forces; the subordinate ranks lose their confidence in their chiefs, while those chiefs lose their nerve. Misplaced confidence gives way to despondency; the military spirit, followed by the national spirit, disappears.

The sudden defeat of the British battle fleets in home waters will involve the loss, temporary and local at least, of the command of the sea; and we may easily imagine the resulting popular outcry, born of the overmastering dread of invasion or starvation, which will inexorably refuse to permit the remaining fleets to be concentrated beyond reach of the enemy but which will oblige any form of popular government in power at the time to order each portion to return in-

dependently to home waters to meet with almost certain destruction on arrival.

Let us also endeavour to form some conception of the condition of the country on the sudden and unexpected outbreak of war ; for it can by no means be disregarded in a consideration of the problem of national defence, or in an attempt to forecast the most probable sequence of events. The success of the British navy must depend largely on the self-restraint displayed by the people.

Owing to the fact that the Bank of England¹ neglects to hold a sufficient gold reserve with which to meet its vast liabilities, it is to be feared that the first shock of a serious war will result in an acute financial crisis, and that the complex and delicate system of credit will collapse. On all sides great employers of labour will be forced to close down their establishments ; prices will rise ; paper securities will become worthless ; and utter misery and distress will fall on the whole community, but especially on the working classes. Though work in the arsenals may be found for considerable numbers, yet it is to be expected that vastly greater numbers will be thrown out of employment and go to swell the forces of anarchy.

¹ It appears that the necessity for a gold reserve is everywhere recognised ; but that opinions differ as to whether its accumulation is the duty of the government, of the Bank of England, or of the local banks. Nothing is therefore done. See the *National Review*, November, 1906, "The Problem of the Gold Reserve." All foreign nations maintain gold reserves with a view to war. Even the Athenians, taught by necessity, recognised the importance of a war fund.

Risings throughout the country, if not a revolution, of the unemployed and starving will, it is to be feared, accompany, or follow immediately on, the outbreak of hostilities, and will inevitably be the first result of any initial disaster at sea. Certain organs of the press, together with many politicians, and numerous hostile spies and paid agitators, will add fuel to the flames.

The first essential of all, if the British people would stave off defeat, will be the introduction of martial law throughout the United Kingdom before the outbreak of hostilities ; for by this means alone can secrecy be ensured, hostile spies checked in their operations, and politicians and press brought under control. But there is not the smallest reason to suppose that the British people, in their ignorance, will acquiesce in the introduction of martial law, until the fact becomes patent to every man that the nation is within measurable distance of defeat—when, in a word, it will be too late. And it seems probable that the introduction of the above measure, or indeed any measure of national importance, will be vehemently resisted by every political demagogue who regards his own, or his party, interest—which is, fundamentally, the same thing—or his own personal predilections, as of more importance than the national interest. The number of these would, unfortunately, appear to be large.

It is certain that political dissension will rise to a supreme height ; and that, if the national leadership is left in the hands of political parties, nothing will be

accomplished except a vast amount of unnecessary discussion. But there will be no time to indulge in discussion ; the time for action will have arrived. This fact will be clearly apparent to every fighting man throughout the country ; and fighting men of a nation of civilians, however mild they may be in times of peace, are apt to become unruly and out of hand in a period of national emergency, if they see that the national leaders are unable to grasp the situation, or are too self-opinionated and ignorant to adopt adequate measures of defence. The fighting men of the British nation, few in numbers though they may be, have rough and ready methods—as history has shown—when the necessity arises, and is clearly apparent. The time for cajolery will have passed ; the employment of force will be necessary with which to suppress disorders. Though the auxiliary forces, or the national army that is to be, will be unfitted to face the troops of a nation in arms in the field, yet it may prove sufficiently highly trained to enforce national order, to carry out the provisions of martial law, and to ensure national discipline. It will therefore probably be the case that the national army will at once, shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, be mobilised by order of the King, or on the initiative of sailors and soldiers, and maintained on a war footing until it can be replaced by an army obtained under the system of universal service. But this measure alone will not suffice, for men must live, and starvation, which is the sharpest spur of all, will

inevitably impel the poverty-stricken to strike for the means of subsistence. The vast mass of the unemployed, the unemployable, and starving must not only be brought under discipline, but must be given the means of livelihood for themselves and families. The most efficacious, if not the only, method by which this end can be attained will be by organisation, that is, by the enrolment of all in the armed forces. But here we at once come to the question of cost. The men of the national army, who will be withdrawn from their occupations, will require pay or, at least, the means of subsistence for their families; and it is improbable that they, who have been used to pay, will consent to serve unpaid.

Thus, in addition to the ordinary cost of war, the British people will be called on to pay and support vast numbers of able-bodied men with their families; and the national resources must quickly break down under the strain. It is evident that the national army, as well as the unemployed and starving, must be called on to serve without pay, provided that their families can be maintained at the expense of the state. But this they will probably refuse to do unless the regular forces similarly consent to serve without pay, and, even then, only if every man in the country, whatsoever his social rank, joins the national forces.¹ It is just possible that the patriotism of the regular

¹ It is interesting to note that, in discussing the question of compulsory service with volunteers, one often hears the remark, "Well, I would not mind serving for a year or two, *if my boss was also obliged to.*"

forces will rise to the occasion ; but, on the other hand, it may not. The payment of British sailors and soldiers is now firmly established by precedent. Patriotism, which breaks through all precedent, is of a high order, and is the outcome of education or defeat ; and if the education of the British people be delayed until the outbreak of hostilities, patriotism can only be aroused when too late, that is, by defeat.

But it is quite possible that the rank and file of the regular, as well as of the national, forces will join the unemployable and starving ; for it must not be forgotten that the officers of the present regulars and militia, at least, are drawn from a totally different class to that which furnishes the rank and file. Whether this will be the case with the new national army remains to be proved. There is, at all times, a certain undercurrent of friction which exists between the class of the officers and that of the rank and file ; and it is in time of disaster that this class hostility becomes accentuated and is apt to develop into open conflict. More especially is this the case in an undisciplined community. If by chance such a contest should commence, we then have civil war ; and overpowering force will have been applied at the vital point of the British nation. The continued disregard of these unpleasant possibilities, or rather probabilities, may well prove fatal to the nation.

But let us, for the sake of argument, assume that the men of the nation display the necessary patriotism and elect to serve without pay ; we then come to the

question of officers. It is essential that these be drawn from the educated classes—not merely from the leisured classes—and that neither birth nor wealth be given precedence over efficiency. Every man of the educated classes, irrespective of his social position, must come forward to offer his services without pay on the same terms as his men—and to serve in such a capacity as his talent for command and his military knowledge may warrant. With such a commencement, the introduction of universal service, and the formation of the nation as a machine of war, would be but a matter of time. Time, however, will be the one thing lacking.

It is possible that if the King, or a Cromwell, were to arise, who could suppress political dissension and internal disorders with a high hand, the country might be saved from defeat. But the British people are notoriously jealous of the slightest increase in the power of the King, and a danger lies in the probability that they will hesitate to call on him until it is too late. Once the fighting men of the country have been aggravated beyond endurance, and have taken the law into their own hands, events will move automatically in the direction of a military dictatorship. But, again, the danger exists that, shortly after the outbreak of hostilities, before any one man has established a great reputation for himself, several Cromwells may arise, who will instantly commence to fight amongst themselves. Even though all of them will assuredly combine to

reduce the political classes to impotence, and, possibly, to inflict punishment on those responsible for the misery of the nation, yet the state of the country will, for the time being, be but little better than its inefficient condition under the rule of the party politician. And even in the case of victory the Cromwell will be loath to lay down his power, lest that he may be tried and hanged for his ministrations in the time of the national emergency. It is true that the modern, or future, Cromwell will organise the nation as a true machine of war, and may, with impunity, hand over the reins of government to an expert general staff; but there is such a thing as personal ambition, and, if history speaks true, ambition, when it has once taken a firm hold of a man, is apt to outweigh all other considerations. And yet it will be essential, if the people would hope merely to stave off defeat, to reduce the political parties in the country to impotence; it is the first step in the suppression of discord.

All men of the nation—except, it might be, certain politicians imbued with the idea of liberty to the exclusion of all other thoughts—will, it is practically certain, gladly follow His Majesty the King if he is called to the exercise of absolute power in the time of emergency. Petty ambitions will give way to loyalty; and, if trouble arises—well, there will be the armed forces to carry out the behests of the King.

But, in the meantime, while Great Britain is striving after efficiency, the enemy will by no means remain inactive. It is on the general national inefficiency—the

absence of national discipline and organisation, the dissensions of political parties, the absence of leadership—that any hostile nation in arms will build its chief hope of success. The optimism which trusts that the scientific general staffs of nations in arms will overlook these defects is misplaced, for it is now a recognised truism that when a nation is inefficient, its armed forces, whether of sea or land, will also, when the time comes, prove to be inefficient. Throughout history the lesson has been taught that the armed forces form an exact replica of the nation as a whole ; and the sole hope of an inefficient nation lies in the appearance of a master-mind whose genius can compensate for all defects.

Every movement made, every blow struck by a hostile nation, will be calculated with a view to its effect on the nerves of our national leaders, with a view to arousing a state of anarchy in the country, and thereby rendering the armed forces helpless, and exposing the vital point of the nation to a deadly blow.

That the British navy may hold many and great advantages over its possible enemies is, of course, the case ; it is one and indivisible, while it may be called on, as in the past—we hope not—to fight fleets of various nationalities ; it may, as was usually the case in the past—though it is now improbable—hold the interior lines of operation. Its discipline, organisation, patriotism, armament, are, as is well known, unsurpassed ; and there is no reason to doubt—and this

every Englishman believes—that British seamen, with their great traditions, will, if victorious, display to the full as high qualities as those displayed by Nelson and his men. Being men, however, they are liable to loss of *moral* if caught at a disadvantage.

But, besides the impediments already enumerated under which the navy must labour, it lacks a trained reserve of sufficient strength, which deficiency may well prove disastrous. It should be noted that the seafaring trade cannot, as in the past, supply deficiencies. The trained warrior is no longer to be found in the mercantile marine, for merchant vessels no longer carry guns. If one lesson was taught more clearly than another in the Boer War, it is this, that it is most unsafe to place too much reliance on “the trade.”

Great Britain's present naval reserve, such as it is, will be required on mobilisation to bring up the navy to war strength—it is probably insufficient even for that purpose. Her mercantile marine, the only body of seamen on whom she can rely to supply the waste of war, is untrained, and will, moreover, be required for other purposes. There also exists in it a large number of aliens, who will not only prove valueless for war purposes, but a source of serious danger in time of emergency.

It seems to be by no means beyond the bounds of possibility that the battleship and large cruiser—though this is quite an unorthodox opinion—will prove, in the future, to be practically helpless in narrow waters

such as the North Sea, English Channel, and Mediterranean ; and that the command of such seas will be fought out by flotillas of torpedo and submarine craft.¹ If, by chance, this theory proves to be correct, the struggle between hostile torpedo and submarine flotillas will certainly be marked by an extraordinary loss of life ; more than ever will victory depend on the martial qualities of the seamen engaged ; more than ever will trained reserves be decisive of success or failure ; and the nature of naval warfare may approximate to the naval struggles of ancient times.

Torpedo craft can be easily, rapidly, and secretly constructed, and superior material strength in capital vessels at the commencement of a war will by no means necessarily counterbalance a deficiency in reserves of trained men. For in a hard-fought struggle, when the capital ships on both sides have, perhaps, been destroyed, the combatants will strain every nerve to turn out those types of small armoured vessels which can be most easily and rapidly constructed. There seems nothing to prevent the secret construction of numerous torpedo craft far inland if large rivers exist in a country. If men are available with which to man them, there seems to be no reason why the element of surprise should not be introduced into naval warfare, and that a great nation which had rested secure in the belief that it was "mistress of the sea" should not find when too

¹ See the Prize Essay for 1903, *R.U.S.I. Journal*. This theory appears to have been exploded by the Russo-Japanese War.

late that there existed no grounds for its belief. It is through surprises of such a nature that great empires have disappeared. There is good reason to suppose that nations in arms, which are also naval powers, possess far larger reserves of trained seamen than we imagine. The number of the German naval reserves, for instance, is held secret. And of one point, at least, we may rest confident; and that is, that a nation in arms which attacks Great Britain will by no means forget that, while the number of British fighting men is limited, the number of its own is practically unlimited.

Thus, whether the action of battleships or torpedo craft will decide the command of narrow seas, there seems no reason to doubt that a sternly contested naval struggle will be extremely costly in men, and that victory will, in the end, incline to that nation which can produce the larger reserves of trained seamen. It is certainly true that Captain Mahan, in *The Interest of America in Sea Power*, maintains the necessity for "high individual fitness in the force, undiluted by dependence upon a large, only partly efficient, reserve element"; and he urges the desirability of highly trained long-service seamen. But this same argument has been applied to warfare on the land from time immemorial, and has been proved a fallacy. It is evident to all men that a small number of highly trained experts will defeat untrained mobs; but neither the soldiers nor the seamen of nations in arms, such as France, Germany, and Japan, can by

any stretch of the imagination be placed in the latter category. So long ago as the Waterloo campaign the power of endurance, the strength to rise superior to defeat, the resolution to fight to the last, was clearly shown to be one of the qualities possessed in a marked degree by the troops of a nation in arms, and it was this unexpected display which was a principal cause of Napoleon's downfall. The superiority of the troops of a nation in arms over long-service troops labouring under an inefficient system was clearly shown in 1870-1; while, in the last war between Russia and Japan, the fact has been made patent to all men that the troops of a nation in arms can display a scientific courage and determination almost beyond the conception of those who have been brought up under an obsolete system.

The words of Captain Mahan carry such great weight, that even a sailor hesitates, and only with extreme diffidence ventures, to run counter to his expressed opinions, while the landsman who does so probably proves himself a simpleton. But nevertheless the study, not only of late, but of ancient wars, forces us to the conclusion that it is wiser to depend on highly trained reserves, whether on sea or land, who may perhaps have become "rusty," than on none at all. And, moreover, in matters pertaining to war, the significance of a national machine of war and of scientific preparation cannot be overlooked.

But then, again, the argument has been put for-

ward that the waste of naval war occurs in *matériel* and armament, and not in men. This, however, appears to be true only of the waste in sickness and disease. As regards the vanquished in battle, the percentage of loss to the number of men engaged is, in naval war, considerably higher than in land warfare, the reason undoubtedly being that on the sea the vanquished cannot scatter and flee—each man for himself. A damaged ship involves the loss of the crew. And, again, the percentage of loss of the victor is usually smaller in naval than in land warfare, the reason being that superiority of force, once established, develops more rapidly into that overwhelming superiority which inflicts such heavy punishment on the weaker side. Disease and sickness have been in the past, however, the principal cause of the waste in land war, and this cause disappears to a great extent in naval warfare.¹ It will also probably disappear in the future to some extent in land warfare. But it must, nevertheless, not be forgotten that the British in the Napoleonic wars, lacking naval reserves, were forced to resort to the pressgang and

¹ Not necessarily, however. Sailors suffer severely in winter from pneumonia and lung diseases, due apparently to the fact that in most British war vessels there is no heating apparatus. The Germans, on the other hand, have apparently considered this point. It is one of those apparent trifles the neglect of which so often leads to defeat. In every inefficient nation the utmost care and forethought are given to the buttons on the gaiters and the tunics, while the soles of the boots, which are hidden, are neglected. See "Naval Shams," *Morning Post*, 31st December, 1906.

other nefarious methods,¹ as well as to employ troops on ships to maintain their numbers, while the French resorted to naval conscription. It is thus evident that a heavy waste of men does occur, and that trained reserves, though they may perhaps be unnecessary to the same extent as for land warfare, are nevertheless by no means to be despised. It seems just barely possible that they may prove to be a decisive factor in a hard-fought naval war of the future. Sailors without ships and guns are, it will be admitted, comparatively useless, but far more so are ships and guns without sailors. The idea, indeed, that naval reserves are unnecessary appears to be on a par with the fallacy that armies can be too large, and with that other, that battles are won by *matériel*, and not by men — by the gun, and not by the man behind it.

Into this question, as into every other problem relating to war, human nature enters in a dominant degree. It is unfortunately the case that during the progress of a great struggle, when on all sides news of heavy battles, of killed, wounded, and mutilated, is published, men will not come forward, unless compulsion of some sort is employed, to face the terrors of war. Those who fail to recognise this fact, and base their calculations on the assumption that men are heroes, have not studied human nature in war, and,

¹ The British seaman, whether volunteer or pressed man, once caught could seldom escape. Every possible makeshift was resorted to to retain men beyond the term of their original engagement; an application for discharge was regarded as a crime. Prisoners were taken from the jails and transformed into British seamen.

it is probable, have not themselves faced the bullets of an enemy.

It must be noted that the training of the armed forces of a nation in arms is of the most rigorous description ; and it seems improbable that voluntarily enlisted or paid forces, whether of the sea or land, can approach the forces of these powers either in scientific knowledge or in the martial qualities. It cannot be too clearly impressed on all that in problems connected with national defence it is essential to face unpleasant facts fearlessly. Though there may be good grounds for the belief, which is prevalent throughout Great Britain, that the British seaman is more proficient in his duties than those of any other nation, it is yet questionable whether in time of stress, of possible disaster, of the inevitable distrust in the capacity of the national leaders,¹ he will display as high an order of patriotism and devotion to his country as the men of the nation in arms, in which all must take their share of the burden of defence, where the peer of the realm must fight as the comrade of the labourer, the clergyman side by side with the thief.

Though, at the present time, so far as we can judge, the British navy need fear no rival on the sea, yet, in years to come, such a rival may rise up. Let us suppose that, at this present moment, a nation in arms is engaged in scientific preparation for war with Great Britain—is there then no ground for pessimism, no fear of the ultimate result ? It is in the matter of

¹ Unless, that is, reform can be introduced in time.

foresight and scientific preparation for war that the shortcomings of bad national leadership are most conspicuous and most disastrous. It must be remembered that the British navy has not met a foe worthy of its steel within the past hundred years ; and the extent to which the operations of fighting men can be hampered by the ill-disciplined clamour of a nation of civilians directed by party politicians must be experienced to be appreciated. If the British navy, in future years, is called on to face the onset of the fleets of a nation in arms which has made scientific preparation during a term of years, and if it then be fast bound by wireless telegraphy to the apron-strings of a party government—why then, Heaven help it, for the science, devotion, and courage of its sailors will avail it little.

It seems clear that the British people are not entirely justified in assuming, as they do, that they are "Mistress of the seas"; the command of the sea, similarly to the control of any other decisive point, will fall to that combatant which can concentrate superior force suddenly and secretly, which possesses the ability and the will to strike first and strike hardest, and which possesses reserves with which to maintain its superiority and confirm its victory. It should never be forgotten, especially by Englishmen, that Great Britain has, before now, lost command of the sea ; and that the Athenians, Carthaginians, and Venetians, each in their time reputed the finest sailors of the day, met defeat at the hands of the Spartans,

Romans, and Turks—nations of landsmen, but nations of warriors. And neither should Englishmen forget that the first step on the road to empire taken by the nation was rendered possible by a trifling mistake in national leadership committed by Philip II of Spain.

Thus, even though we had been definitely assured by Providence of decisive victory at sea, it would yet be wise to take into consideration the possibility of defeat and the means by which we might hope to gain time for recuperation. But Providence has given no such assurance ; and the scientific fighting man cannot fail to see several methods by which the power of the British fleets may, a few years hence, if the national leadership be wanting—as under the present system it must be found wanting—be put to so shrewd a test that the possibility, not only of defeat, but of decisive defeat, will not be very far off. There is the case in which a hard-fought struggle may denude the combatants of their best men, when victory may rest with that nation which can put the more highly trained reserves into the field, and which can the more rapidly construct small warships. There is the case in which the sudden outbreak of hostilities may find us unprepared or scattered in the face of a concentrated enemy. There is the case in which a sudden blow may be struck without declaration of war. There is the case in which indulgence in that favourite pastime of British “dialectical strategists,” termed a “naval demonstration,” may place a portion of our fleets at the mercy of an enemy.

There is the case in which a combination of hostile nations, or careful preparation on the part of one of them, may place our fleets face to face with actual superiority of force. There is the case in which invention, or progress in science, may arm an adversary with a deadly weapon. It is in this very point that the nation in arms holds such a vast advantage over the nation of civilians. In the former, scientific progress and invention with a view to war are encouraged by the state ; in the latter, they are left to flourish as best they can. In Germany, for instance, the young scientist who proves his value receives a pension in order that he may prosecute his studies ; in Great Britain, it is, as we have seen, the "unemployable" who is supported by the public.

All these various possibilities, or rather probabilities, are surely no mere idle speculations of a diseased imagination ; they are but some amongst the ordinary methods by which nations have triumphed in war from time immemorial. They are innumerable ; and a man may seldom hope to foresee which particular one will be adopted ; for, as Lord Roberts writes, "it is almost impossible to fathom the designs of the offensive."

No man with any knowledge of the meaning of the term "war," or who can appreciate the value of scientific national leadership and methodical preparation, will venture to affirm that the defeat of the British navy and loss of the command of the sea is "impossible of conception" ; for no matter what its material

strength may be, its victory or defeat must, in great measure, depend on circumstances beyond the control of its admirals and seamen. We may be certain that educated British sailors, wise in their knowledge of the vicissitudes of war, would be the last to uphold so unscientific a contention. The mere suggestion to the contrary would indeed verge on impertinence; for the leader—and this is a military platitude—who fails to take into consideration the possibility of defeat, and to evolve alternative plans by which he shall be able to neutralise the long train of disasters which is the natural result of defeat, cannot be termed a scientific leader, and is therefore unfitted to command or in any way to be concerned in the leadership of armed men, whether on sea or land.

When we consider the grave disadvantages under which the British navy must labour in the conduct of war, it would seem that we are perfectly justified in the assertion that if a nation in arms, within striking distance of the British Islands, has marked down the British nation as its proximate adversary, the probabilities are that it will successfully bring superior force to bear at the decisive point at the decisive moment, that it will seize the initiative, will strike the first heavy blow, will gain temporary control of the narrow seas, and that it will, sooner or later, convert temporary into permanent supremacy. Any other conclusion is unduly optimistic; for if there be anything which is "impossible" in war, it is this, that 150,000 to 200,000 sailors, no matter how scientific,

gallant, and devoted they may be, can, if left unsupported by the nation at large, withstand the mighty force which is the result of the scientific leadership and methodical preparation of a nation in arms.¹

It may be argued, however, that even with its battle fleets destroyed, a vigorous nation, able to construct torpedo craft, could, until its arsenals were finally destroyed or captured, indefinitely prolong the struggle on the sea. This argument is undoubtedly true to a certain extent ; but under present conditions of naval warfare, wherever the victorious battle fleets moved, their sway in that particular locality would be absolute and indisputable.

If a nation in arms gains command of the sea, how will it endeavour to force Great Britain to her knees?

There are two methods which immediately present themselves. These are starvation and invasion. Which of these would a victorious nation adopt?

¹ The great hope of the British navy, and of the nation, lies, not so much in the number and strength of the British ships of war, but in the prolonged course of instruction, nine to ten years, which the young naval officer undergoes. By that means alone the thorough efficiency of the service is probably ensured ; but unfortunately their numbers are too small to exercise any appreciable effect on the vast mass of the general national inefficiency for war. But the naval officers of nations in arms undergo as long a—and, it is possible, a more scientific—course of study.

CHAPTER VIII

THE STARVATION OF THE BRITISH ISLANDS

Intervention of neutrals—Submission—Expediency and feasibility of the blockade of the British Islands.

WAR is not conducted in accordance with the rules of the prize-ring, in which a pause is called after each round by the umpires and the exhausted permitted time in which to refresh himself. It is rather of the nature of a deadly struggle between two savages—safe from interruption in that the bystanders, divided into two hostile camps, fear to intervene—in which each combatant seeks to get his adversary at a disadvantage and to deliver a death-blow. When two nations are at war, and one has gained a distinct advantage, it must always be its object to press its adversary to the uttermost, to permit him no opportunity for recuperation, but to strike “incessantly and remorselessly” while he is temporarily disabled, in the hope that a vital point may be reached. And, conversely, it must be a chief object of that nation which is at a disadvantage to gain time, for every moment the decisive issue is delayed must tell in his favour.

Submission to the enemy, which in times of peace

seems so simple a method of extrication from grave national danger, is not always possible ; for the victor, looking to the future, may propose such terms as will involve utter misery, or even practical extinction. It is certainly true that neutral nations, seeking to ensure the balance of power, may interfere to prevent the absolute destruction of the defeated ; but it must be remembered that neutrals are principally concerned with their own entirely selfish desires and interests, and that they will seldom intervene unless such intervention is to their own advantage. Intervention need only be expected, indeed, when neutrals fear that the victor will become so strong as to constitute a danger to the rest of the world, or when there exists grave risk that they themselves may be drawn into the struggle. When, however, all neutrals have undoubted advantages to gain by the complete overthrow of one of the combatants, there can be but little doubt that they will stand aloof, and of this fact there is ample proof in the pages of history. There was no nation which intervened to save Poland from partition ; while Great Britain has intervened in the near East, not to save the Turks from destruction, but to rescue the Dardanelles from the grip of the Russians.

The collapse of the British Empire would tend to the material advantage of most of the great nations of the world. Thus Russia would gain her ambition of an ice-free port ; France would dominate the whole of North and West Africa ; Germany would establish her power on the sea, would gain an outlet across the

ocean for her teeming population, and a vast increase of trade and wealth; the United States would establish their control of the Caribbean Sea, the outlet to the future Panama Canal, and would dominate Canada; Turkey would recover Egypt; while Japan would find room for expansion in Australasia. Of these powers, France alone might consider her national existence jeopardised by the absence of the British power to act as a counterpoise to that of Germany, and her interests in North Africa threatened by the resuscitation of the Mohammedan power of Turkey. And for the present, at least, while friction exists between the United States and Japan, the interests of the latter are probably bound up with a powerful British Empire.

But the chief sufferers from the defeat of Great Britain would be the small states of Europe and the British colonies. The condition of the latter would be pitiable in the extreme; distance alone would, for the time being, save them from the unpleasant attentions of the great nations of the world. The intervention of the smaller states of Europe, of Japan, or of British colonies¹ between Great Britain and one or more victorious European powers would be out of the question, and, if attempted, their efforts would be useless. France, liable to invasion, would hesitate to intervene; while the intervention of the United States would, owing to her distance from the theatre of hostilities, probably prove futile. That vast

¹ Unless, indeed, they set an example to the mother-country and constitute themselves modern machines of war.

struggles over the spoils of the British Empire might occur is beyond doubt ; but it is less probable than would at first glance appear, for the interests of the great nations of the world, other than Great Britain and the British Empire, are so clearly marked out and defined, that it seems probable that diplomacy would successfully evade war.

It is, however, true that what may be termed sentimental or moral considerations would strongly urge intervention—especially that of the United States—to prevent the complete overthrow of Great Britain. The British people has for many centuries been in the forefront of progress ; it has colonised half the surface of the globe ; it has greatly ameliorated the unhappy lot of the coloured races ; and has even—though this is not regarded by foreign nations as an unmixed blessing—raised their moral tone to so high a standard as to render them—in their own estimation—the equal of the white man.

Great Britain has, in fact, as we Englishmen so constantly urge, carried the blessings of civilisation to the four corners of the earth ; but, on the other hand, as foreign nations so constantly urge, she has herself been the greatest gainer thereby—and this at the expense of those foreign nations. The extent to which these moral or sentimental considerations would, in the deliberations of neutral states, weigh against the material and palpable advantages to be gained by the fall of the empire is a problem the solution of which must perforce stand over until the time arrives. Though

it is to be feared that, in this material age, material considerations chiefly would be reckoned, yet it is undoubtedly the case that a victorious power, which had gained the command of the sea, would seek most earnestly to strike a decisive blow as soon as possible, and in such a manner as to give no excuse for intervention.

Failing the intervention of neutrals, therefore, it seems probable that a half-beaten nation which sues for peace must, in the future, face the imposition of such onerous terms that it will prefer to continue the struggle at all hazards. The vast war indemnity which will undoubtedly be exacted by the victor as the price of the permission to merely exist will be, so to speak, the loss of the life-blood of an overwrought and already half-dead man. It is true that, at first glance, the termination of the Russo-Japanese War does not appear to support this view. But it must be remembered that the Japanese waived their claim to an indemnity not out of consideration for the Russians, but partly, perhaps, owing to the representations of the United States and—it is probable—of Great Britain, and chiefly owing to the fact that they could not bring sufficient pressure to bear on, or strike at a vital point of, Russia. The grave danger existed, moreover, that a continuance of the struggle would involve Great Britain, France, and Germany. That the representations of neutrals were successful in this instance was probably due to the fact that the Japanese, not being a Christian nation, were com-

pelled, if they would retain the goodwill of the Anglo-Saxon nations, to display a high standard of magnanimity, and that, being a weak nation, they could not afford, at that moment, to lose that goodwill. They had, moreover, gained the objects for which they fought—security for the future, an outlet for their surplus population, and the complete control of the oversea commerce of the Far East. It would seem that we may justly argue that the comparatively mild termination of the Russo-Japanese War should be regarded as an exception and not as the rule.

The immediate result of this loss of wealth will be—if it has not already occurred—the utter dislocation of all business and commerce, with the consequent misery and starvation of the whole mass of the lower orders, and this is especially the case in a closely populated country.

It is perfectly certain that the immediate reply to British proposals for peace will be the demand for a war indemnity, coupled with one for the occupation of British seaports and arsenals until the indemnity is paid. Once in possession of the ports, the adversary will hold Great Britain at his mercy; and, on the slightest provocation, fancied, real, or provoked, will quickly fill the country with armed men, and will only relax the grip when forced to do so by the intervention of neutrals, and, in any case, not until he has reduced Great Britain to such extremity that no fear for the future can arise.

It is defeat and submission to the enemy, and not

the mere state of war, which shakes the whole national edifice to its foundation : it ruins prestige both at home and abroad ; it destroys the national credit ; and a nation may hardly recover the loss of *moral* involved. The elements of disorder and anarchy spring to the surface ; the cry for vengeance on the responsible national leaders is loud ; the mere demand for food in a populous, and still more in an overcrowded, country suffices to cause revolution—for men must live. The outcome of such an upheaval cannot be foreseen : it may purge the nation ; it may kill it. But even if the former be the case, the result can only be reached through national humiliation, through anarchy—when the community, at the mercy of its neighbours, is browbeaten on all sides—followed by the inevitable stern and salutary despotism of the soldier. A nation, like a man who falls in the race for life, must trust to its own unaided exertions if it would rise again. The battle of life is no fairy tale. Nature, or Providence, equally with mankind and the rest of the animal world, is bitterly cruel to the stricken ; there is no crime equal to that of failure or helplessness. But when there exists the courage to continue the struggle, the determination to conquer even though at the last gasp, then there need be but little fear for the future.

A state which finds itself face to face with an enemy in the struggle for existence would do wisely to fight to the last rather than submit ; and more particularly is this the case with the British nation.

These facts will, it is probable, quickly become apparent to the common sense of the people in a time of real emergency ; and there exists the possibility that men who so much as suggest submission will be regarded as hostile spies and mercilessly put to death.¹

The essentials of existence are food and warmth ; and an army, or the inhabitants of a city, and perhaps equally a great nation, will suffer extremes of privation even in these essentials rather than admit defeat. The modern civilised community, however, is habituated to luxury, and would feel the loss of those luxuries to almost as great an extent as the deprivation of the necessities of life. And then, again, modern warfare demands a vast assortment of complicated implements, together with the means for their construction. If a half-beaten nation is self-supporting in these essentials of existence and warfare, it can, unless its territories are actually occupied by the enemy, indefinitely prolong the struggle. If, however, it is not self-supporting, but draws its supplies from outside sources, it then becomes a question whether the blockade of its frontiers is a feasible operation as well as a measure of expediency, and

¹ It is only fair to mention, however, that the above ideas are by no means universal in Great Britain at the present time. "Our loss of the command of the sea was an eventuality almost impossible of conception. If it did happen, the only thing for us would be to make peace on any terms (hear, hear)."—Extract from the speech of the Under Secretary of State for War in the House of Lords, Monday, the 27th June, 1904 (*Morning Post*).

whether it is the most rapid and efficacious manner in which its submission can be assured.

It must not be forgotten that the efforts on the part of a victorious hostile power to blockade and, on the instant, to bring to a complete standstill the whole vast mass of trade of Great Britain would seriously affect the economic conditions of almost every country of the world, with far-reaching results to the social and political equilibrium; this fact, combined with the friction which must necessarily arise between the blockading power and neutrals, would certainly accentuate the danger of intervention—a danger which would materially increase with any delay in the final decision of the war. Neutral nations which might regard the invasion of Great Britain with equanimity might well, on the other hand, be seriously disturbed at the prospect of a long-continued interruption of trade. Though they would undoubtedly stand to gain by the gradual transfer of British trade to their own ports, yet, on the other hand, they would of necessity lose heavily by the sudden loss of the great market afforded by the British Islands. This danger of rousing the animosity of neutrals, with the consequent risk of intervention, would be the one of all others which a victorious hostile power would most particularly seek to avoid, even as it would be the one which Great Britain would, in the last straits, strive most earnestly to bring about.¹ Unless, there-

¹ The Russian efforts to bring about the intervention of neutrals towards the end of the late war should be noted.

fore, success could be achieved by blockade very rapidly—within a few weeks, indeed—the attempt would be, if there were any other means by which a more rapid decision could be reached, of doubtful expediency. A close and rigorous blockade would, in any case, be essential; every source of supply must be cut, and food in every shape or form excluded from the country.

We have no example in history of war waged by a nation which depended for its subsistence on imported supplies, and, as a consequence, there never has been a case in which a whole nation has been starved into submission.¹ But we have innumerable examples of the starvation of large cities and whole armies, and at first glance it would seem that the larger the number of mouths to be fed, the easier and the more rapid the process of starvation. It is, however, one thing to blockade a city or a comparatively small tract of country; it is another to blockade a whole territory.

In the case of the blockade of the frontiers of any country not self-supporting and the gradual starvation of the people, the demand for food must always be so great, and the prices paid for successful delivery so enormous, that the profits to be gained by successful blockade runners must—and this was clearly proved in the War of Secession—far more than counter-balance the losses involved in failure. And more than ever will this be the case in the event of the blockade

¹ The nearest approach to these conditions is that of Spain after the defeat of the Spanish Armada. See chapter 1.

of the British Islands ; for the nature and large extent of the coast-line, with its numerous sheltered bays, inlets, and small harbours, will certainly facilitate the secret debarkation of supplies ; and the numbers and wealth of the population will guarantee vast profits to successful ventures.

It is true that an efficient system of blockade running will demand time, and it may well be that a special class of vessel will prove to be necessary ; still there is little doubt that, in view of the profits to be expected, the great commercial firms of the world will quickly solve the difficulty. And, moreover, the United States has definitely refused to consider food as contraband of war ; and it is thus the case, apparently, that she reserves to herself the right to supply food to any combatant which demands it, at all times and in all circumstances, without committing a breach of neutrality. No mere paper blockade will be sufficient to starve Great Britain into submission ; and neither will it suffice to merely place fleets on the recognised trade routes by which supplies may be conveyed, for neutral shipping will quickly find a means to evade these watchdogs. It is true that the loss of the command of the sea must ultimately result in the collapse of the British Empire and the reduction of the British power to insignificance. But this result will not occur in one, or two, or even five years ; it may never occur, for Great Britain may again wrest the sea supremacy from her adversary. The adversary can by no means trust to such dilatory action.

A close watch, not only on all harbours, but on every inlet and indentation of the coast-line of both Great Britain and Ireland, will be necessary. But this will be a matter of extraordinary difficulty and danger ; for the hostile navy will be forced to surround the whole length of coast with an attenuated line of ships of war liable to the constant attacks of submarines and torpedo craft.

So long as Great Britain holds the power to build torpedo craft—that is, so long as her naval arsenals remain intact—and can find the men with which to man them, she can always, at a given time and place, render the blockade temporarily inefficacious. Thus the hostile power will be forced to maintain supports and reserves at certain points behind her first line with which to re-establish the broken blockade. And not only will this arrangement be necessary in the narrow waters to the east and south of Great Britain, where hostile harbours in close proximity to the theatre of operations exist to serve as bases, but it will also be necessary on the west coast of the British Islands, in the open Atlantic ocean. It is hardly necessary to mention that the problem of coal supply alone will be a matter of supreme difficulty and one which, under present conditions, will probably cause the breakdown of the whole scheme of blockade. It is, indeed, a well-known fact that a harbour, well placed as a base of operations, is essential to the establishment of a close blockade ; and though this difficulty will, doubtless, be overcome in time, yet

time will be the one thing not available. But this is not all. In addition to this blockade, and as the simplest means to effect the purpose, it will be found necessary to maintain a close watch on the harbours of those countries from which supplies emanate—as Great Britain was obliged to do in the Napoleonic wars—and to establish a very efficient system of intelligence, at considerable cost, in those harbours themselves.

On the whole it would seem that an attempt to establish an effective blockade of the British Islands must resolve itself into an attempt to blockade, not only the British coast-line, not only the harbours of British colonies, but those of all neutral nations, as the only possible means of success—an attempt not only foredoomed to failure, but one which will, unless the whole world is in league against Great Britain, lead to certain intervention. It would thus seem that a blockade which aims at the prevention of the smuggling of contraband of war alone will be a matter of exceeding difficulty ; while one which aims at the exclusion of food supplies and materials not contraband of war, the traffic in which will be openly indulged in by neutrals, will prove to be an operation of such magnitude as to require the united efforts of the fleets of the whole world in league against Great Britain. One, or even two, naval powers can hardly in any conceivable contingency be in a position—after having dealt with the British fleets—to establish an effective blockade of the British Islands.

But though the close blockade of the British Islands would seem to be both inexpedient and impracticable, it is nevertheless certain that the mere temporary interruption of the great volume of commerce to Great Britain, even if it does not entail actual starvation, will yet involve such misery and disaffection throughout the length and breadth of the land that a large and powerful section of the people will cry out for peace at any price. Whether or no such an outcry will suffice to cause submission will depend on the patriotic spirit of the people and, above all, on the resolution, firmness, and fearlessness in the execution of their duty to king and country of the national leaders and the men of the armed forces. If a Channel tunnel had been completed, the feasibility of the starvation of the country, unless France were the enemy of Great Britain, would be still further reduced.

It will, in any case, be seen that the process of starvation will by no means, necessarily, be the easy, expeditious, and certain mode of forcing the submission of the British nation as is so generally believed in Great Britain; it will, in fact, be by no means beyond the bounds of possibility that the British people may rise to the occasion, may, as other communities have done before in the world's history, hold out through extremes of privation and misery; there is no saying but that they may, if granted time by the inaction of the adversary—the national sentiment and patriotism aroused by

the national danger, for patriotism is the child of adversity—make efforts to renew the struggle on the sea, and they may succeed. On the whole, it may be said that the attempted starvation of the British people is hardly an operation which will commend itself to the trained and scientific leaders of a nation in arms, if any more expeditious and decisive method offers itself.

CHAPTER IX

THE CONQUEST OF THE BRITISH ISLANDS

The transport of troops across the sea—Raids—Invasion in force—Numerous landings probable—Difficulty of invasion exaggerated—Invasion will be the method adopted.

IT may be argued that a close blockade of the entire British coast-line will be necessary to cover the operation of invasion, even as it will be an essential condition to starvation. It is true that, unless a close blockade be established, there will always exist the danger of the sudden interruption of the transport of troops across the seas, together with the possible destruction of numerous transports filled with men. It is the case, needless to say, that the heavy loss of life incurred may amount to a disaster of the first magnitude ; and it is largely held in England that the mere possibility of such a disaster will suffice to deter European nations from the attempt to effect the passage of the sea. It is forgotten that nations in arms regard a heavy loss of life as a necessary, if pitiful, feature of war ; and that any one of them will be slow to discard any operation which holds out a prospect of decisive success on this account alone. It would, moreover, seem to be the case that the transport of

troops can be undertaken with comparative impunity, provided that the remnants of the British battle fleets are blockaded in their harbours, and the hostile fleets, or what remains of them, concentrated to ensure control of the narrow waters across which the passage must be effected. The existence of the Russian fleets at Port Arthur and Vladivostok, for example, even though their enemy was by no means in overwhelming strength, did not, to any appreciable extent, affect the transport of the invading armies. It was clearly recognised by the Russians that a determined sortie of their fleets, though it might lead to the temporary dislocation of the enemy's transport arrangements, would infallibly result in the utter destruction of their own fleets. Defeat carries with it loss of *moral*; and it will probably be found in future wars, as in the late war, that the men of a "fleet in being" will prefer to remain in being rather than court certain destruction without the prospect of achieving any valuable result. The temporary interruption of a hostile line of communication, by a force too weak to maintain its position, is seldom of any real value.

And it is further argued that a hostile power will never dare to attempt the transport of troops in face of the numerous submarine and torpedo craft which will pour out of British harbours. It is forgotten that these torpedo craft must first, before they can attack the transports, destroy, or avoid the enemy's torpedo craft, to say nothing of his cruisers and battleships; and the fact is also disregarded that, even as the

destroyer followed hard on the heels of the torpedo boat, so will the submarine destroyer, or the anti-submarine, inevitably make its appearance. A determined onslaught on a well-guarded hostile fleet will be an operation of a very different nature to the temporary interruption of a weak blockade on the western coasts of the British Islands.

But, again, even supposing that the destroyer and submarine are to play so decisive a rôle in future wars, where are the large numbers of British seamen to come from with which to man the numerous craft which will pour from the British harbours on the mere threat of invasion? As we have seen, it is in this very eventuality that the value of a large and trained reserve will make itself felt, while the absence of one may well prove disastrous. It is, of course, the case that so long as the British fleets are in a position to contest the command of the sea, the invasion of the country on a large scale must be impracticable; while the idea that a nation in arms will waste its strength in "raids" is obviously absurd.¹ The science of national leadership has progressed since the days of Louis XV, or the French Revolutionary Directories; raids are now chiefly employed to distract the hostile attention from the decisive point. A raid into the British Islands would be calculated to cause the con-

¹ The British people appear to be crazed on the subject of "raids." Before the Boer War, they based all their calculations on the assumption that the Boers would limit their offensive operations to raids into Natal and Cape Colony. The assumption was quite false.

centration of all British force, naval and military, in the United Kingdom. Russia, having designs on India, might possibly attempt a raid into the British Islands in order to check the movement of reinforcements to India. France or Germany, about to invade England, might direct a raid into Ireland.

Once the British fleet is forced to acknowledge the supremacy of the hostile fleet and to fly for security to its harbours,¹ then there is no reason why the enemy should not endeavour to pass troops across the sea for the delivery of a decisive blow at the vital point of the British nation, notwithstanding the fact that in doing so he accepts the risk of the defeat of his fleet and the capture or destruction of a part of his transports. Risk, with an adequate object in view, will be cheerfully accepted by a nation in arms.

And neither will the size of the transport fleet add very greatly to its vulnerability, provided the British fleet has been reduced to impotence, though it will certainly be wise to avoid the assemblage of an enormous fleet of transports in the neighbourhood of a harbour from which torpedo attack is to be expected. From the point of view of the security of the transport fleet, it will undoubtedly be wiser to scatter the invading force and to effect landings at various parts of the coast rather than throw the whole force ashore at one point. By this means also a more rapid disembarkation can be effected.

¹ As has happened before now.

But, on the other hand, such a course will grant the British the interior lines in the operations on land. To what extent will this fact be calculated to reduce the chances of a successful invasion?

A nation in arms, which counts its trained soldiers by the million, pitted against the British nation, of which the trained army is comparatively insignificant in numbers, having gained command of the sea and determined on, and prepared for, invasion, will "seek to put its strong point against the weak point of the adversary," or, in other words, to overwhelm Great Britain with armed men.

The first step towards the attainment of this ultimate object will be to gain a firm foothold on the British shores. Taking into consideration the small size of the country, the exact point of landing and its distance from the capital will evidently be of secondary importance; the primary consideration will be to gain, at all costs, several bases of operation. Once firmly established on the coast, and holding command of the sea, the invader can, in the course of one or two months, according to the nature and number of the bases he has seized, reinforce his expeditionary forces to such a strength as will enable him to assume the offensive with overwhelming force and to defy all opposition to his advance.

The primary object of the British, on the other hand, must be to destroy each hostile expeditionary force before it can firmly establish itself, and, at all costs, to deny it a harbour as a base of operations.

If, therefore, a hostile expeditionary force seizes a landing, the British must as rapidly as possible concentrate an overwhelming force against it in the hope of driving it into the sea before it can receive reinforcements or move against any harbour which may exist in the neighbourhood of its point of disembarkation. Assuming that the expeditionary force numbers some ten thousand men, with cyclists and light quick-firing field guns, but without mounted troops, the British will still require to concentrate some twenty thousand trained men, that is, regular troops, against it before the attack can be commenced. If but one landing occurs, these twenty thousand men could be brought to the point within twenty-four hours; but even in that time the enemy will—if he has reconnoitred his position in peace time—have strongly entrenched himself; and the attack may well fail. It would be the wiser course to concentrate at least three times the numbers which the enemy had landed.¹ In any case, the enemy's position must first be reconnoitred; and if his position has been judiciously selected, this will be a matter of difficulty and time. If the teaching of the war in the Far East is true, the attack on even a small entrenched force requires two to three days, or possibly even a week, of previous reconnaissance and preparation before it can be commenced. During this period the enemy will have further strengthened his position, and may have received

¹ The enemy's numbers could be approximately inferred from the time occupied in disembarkation and the size of his transport fleet.

reinforcements. But supposing two or three hostile landings—reconnaissances having been executed, positions selected, and arrangements perfected in peace time—occur simultaneously, and that, in each case, the enemy pushes forward cyclist patrols to destroy railways, telegraphs, and to check the advance of the British, it is evident that not only will the British be obliged to concentrate larger forces against them, but that a considerably longer period of time will be required for the destruction of the enemy. The British can by no means afford to utilise the interior lines of operation and to blockade or disregard one of these forces until the others have been destroyed, lest that one should seize so strong a position and entrench itself so strongly as to make itself impregnable to all but siege operations. And, moreover, the popular outcry from the invaded district will force the hand of any party government.

The capture of such a position, when the defender can be reinforced by sea, is, as history shows, an almost hopeless operation; for the assailant lives in fear of a sudden counter-stroke by overwhelming force.¹ The attack of an entrenched position, moreover, its flanks probably covered by the sea or estuaries of rivers, and possibly defended by the fire of ships of war, demands a high standard of training, overwhelming and organised numbers, and the display of the sternest patriotism and dis-

¹ As examples we may mention Wallenstein's siege of Stralsund, and Wellington's defence of Torres Vedras.

cipline on the part of the assailant ; ill-disciplined masses, even in overwhelming numbers, hurl themselves ineffectually against such a barrier. The fire of patriotism must be combined with the stolid spirit of self-sacrifice born of rigid discipline and ingrained habit before success can be hoped for in such encounters. Even if successful in his attack, the assailant will probably lose a large proportion of officers, and the best, bravest, and most highly trained of his men ; a few such onslaughts, even though victory be gained, will suffice, unless large reserves of trained men are forthcoming, to demoralise his armies. Further operations will perforce devolve upon undisciplined auxiliaries, and the whole defence of the country will quickly degenerate into guerilla warfare—the beginning of the end.¹

It will, doubtless, be argued that the British will oppose the actual disembarkation of these expeditionary forces ; but it must not be forgotten that the command of the sea grants the power of secrecy and surprise, that the landings will be accompanied by numerous feints, demonstrations, and false reports, and that it will be utterly impossible for the British leaders to decide which is the true point of attack and which the false. The actual landing might possibly be opposed by small bodies of the national army. There are so many localities around the British coast

¹ It is worthy of note that the auxiliary forces are half trained on the supposition that they will invariably act on the defensive. This supposition appears to be quite false. It is the auxiliary forces who will be called on to attack an entrenched enemy.

at which the disembarkation of troops is possible ; there are numerous estuaries and inlets which can be utilised as temporary bases ; there are many harbours, unfortified on the land side, which are liable to be seized by surprise with but little difficulty. It is, of course, possible that these harbours will be fortified immediately on the outbreak of hostilities, but it seems improbable, for fortification will interfere with private rights—that is, with the “liberty of the subject”—and will consequently be delayed till the last possible moment, probably until too late. The British people have, moreover, been taught that fortifications are unnecessary—mere extravagant luxuries!¹ There also exists a widespread belief that the operation of landing on the weather-beaten coasts of the British Islands is “impossible”; they forget that the Romans, the Norsemen, the Saxons, the Normans, and the French have, in the days of sails, successfully landed, and that the introduction of steam has shorn the operation of far more than half its difficulties. There is no reason to suppose that modern continental soldiers are more afraid of wet feet than their prototypes of the past, and if some of them drown—well, it yet remains to be proved that death by drowning is much more unpleasant than death by the bullet.

¹ The writer by no means advocates the fortification on the land side of every harbour and inlet. Fortifications would be quite unnecessary if the British were a nation in arms ; but under present conditions they would certainly appear to be desirable in certain localities. It is quite possible that Harwich, for instance, might be seized without declaration of war, simultaneously with an attack on the British fleet.

Given command of the sea, the passage of the narrow seas between Great Britain and the Continent will probably prove to be an operation of but little more difficulty than the passage of a great river, such as the Danube or Mississippi. It is true that the President of the Council of Imperial Defence, in his exposition on the impossibility of invasion, has practically asserted that France does not hold available sufficient sea transport for the conveyance of more than 70,000 men. It was, however, an obvious misstatement. For the calculation was based on the assumption that four tons per man is necessary; whereas, as is well known to every educated soldier and sailor, one, to one and a half, tons per man is sufficient for so short a voyage. Calculations on the invasion problem should be based on the assumption that less than one ton per man will be required. As a matter of fact, there is at all times in Hamburg sufficient transport for the conveyance of over 150,000 men.¹

It is undoubtedly the case that either France or Germany, given command of the sea, could with but little difficulty and loss throw overwhelming forces into Great Britain; the dangers involved in such an operation would not be comparable with those involved in a struggle on land against one another. An invasion of Great Britain to these two nations combined would be but a trifling operation, which could be successfully

¹ See the *National Service Journal*, "The Problem of Invasion"; February, 1907.

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conducted with but little difficulty. It is probable that the hostile power would not hesitate to grant the British the advantage of the interior lines, but would seek to seize simultaneously, not one or two, but numerous footings on the British shores.

As regards the capacity for resistance to invasion enjoyed by the British army as at present constituted, the reader may, having attentively studied the reports of the various Royal Commissions which have sought to throw light on this vexed question, form his own conclusions. But, in view of the fact that the militia and volunteers are unfitted to face the troops of a nation in arms,¹ and that the defence of the country will devolve on the regular army,² it seems probable that 250,000 of the highly trained and well-organised soldiers of France or Germany, successfully landed, would quickly, in normal times, overcome all opposition and bring the country to their feet.

But it might well be the case that the initial struggle for the command of the sea will last many months; and, in that lapse of time, it will be argued, volunteers will everywhere flock to the standard, great camps will everywhere be established, the land forces of the country will quickly be organised, and the intending invaders will be face to face, not with the British army as at present constituted, but, if weapons are avail-

¹ See the Duke of Norfolk's Commission.

² Numbering, perhaps, 180,000 trained fighting men, including reserves, but excluding immature recruits, quartered in the United Kingdom.

able, with a *levée-en-masse*. But, as we have endeavoured to show, a clear distinction must be drawn between the capacity for offence and defence of the armed force of a nation in arms and that furnished by a *levée-en-masse* : the former is the highly finished instrument fashioned by experts ; the latter is a makeshift fashioned by amateurs. It is, however, always possible that the navy may succumb to a sudden, carefully prepared, and entirely unexpected stroke ; in which case invasion may commence within a few weeks, or even days, of the outbreak of hostilities.

It would seem that a nation in arms which had scientifically prepared for war against Great Britain, which had won the initial moves and gained command of the sea, and which had, moreover, reconnoitred selected points of disembarkation on the British coast, would be perfectly justified in the belief—

That numerous points of disembarkation could be seized without much difficulty.

That a harbour might possibly be seized.

That two, or more, of these points of disembarkation could be held for such a period of time as would enable the expeditionary forces to be reinforced and to entrench themselves strongly.

That though some of these expeditionary forces might be destroyed, yet that they would inflict heavy and irreparable losses—especially in officers—on the British, and exhaust the capacity of the British for further organised effort.

That if two, or more, of these expeditionary forces could hold their own for a period of about two to three weeks, the ultimate success of the invasion would be, if not actually assured, yet clearly within view.

That the decisive nature of the result to be expected would be well worth the risk.

If a nation in arms had merely established a decided superiority on the sea and had driven the British fleets into their harbours, the operation of invasion could still be commenced with a fair prospect of ultimate success.

It is needless to point out that if the available British regular army were already employed across the sea—on the frontier of India, in Egypt, or in South Africa, for example—the difficulties of invasion would practically disappear.

Given command of the sea, it would evidently be fatuity on the part of a nation in arms to refrain from invasion and to trust to the dilatory process of starvation when easy and rapid success might be achieved by the delivery of a blow. But more than this, the prestige to be gained by a successful invasion would, of itself, be sufficient inducement to a continental power to undertake the operation ; and, moreover, the martial spirit of a nation in arms would ill brook so pusillanimous a course as would be involved in a mere blockade. It is even possible that the enemy would merely seek to prevent the importation of arms and munitions of war, and would encourage the

importation of food-stuffs and raw material, not only in order that he might the more easily feed his own troops, but that he might gain the goodwill of neutral nations whose trade interests he would promote.

There are certain well-defined principles which decide whether a fortress is to be besieged and assaulted, or merely blockaded and starved into submission. A siege demands large numbers of men ; blockade demands time. If men be lacking, or are required elsewhere, and if time be unimportant, the assailant will be content to adopt the more prolonged method of starvation. If, however, time be of primary importance, and men are available, he will besiege and assault.

Englishmen would do well to face unpleasant facts fearlessly, for a few more years of self-deception and foolish complacency may well result in a terrible national calamity. The British Islands, the citadel of the empire, may fairly be likened to a fortress, half-armed, ill-constructed, of which the fortifications are obsolete and have fallen into disrepair, garrisoned by an entirely insufficient body of not too highly trained troops, supported by a fairly numerous body of untrained, unorganised, ill-disciplined, ill-led, and half-armed auxiliaries, with a vast crowd of a civil population, a considerable portion of which consists of foreigners, lacking discipline, not overburdened with patriotism, including in its numbers, even amongst its legislative classes, men openly disloyal, who cannot under the laws of the town be restrained from affording open

assistance and encouragement to the enemy ; the whole commanded, not by a commandant, nor even by military men, but by representatives of the people swayed by every breath of public opinion. Such a fortress would probably fall on the mere threat of bombardment, and most certainly to a determined assault ; but, if granted time, the inhabitants might, as has so often happened in history, rise to the occasion, uproot existing evils with a stern hand, and ultimately, when hardened by adversity, conduct a heroic and, it might even be, a successful defence. It would be the extreme of pusillanimity—verging on cowardice, indeed—on the part of a hostile general who, having large numbers of highly trained troops at his disposal and but a limited period available, failed to assault such a fortress as is here depicted—the more so when the capture of that fortress would gain the ultimate object with which his nation had gone to war. In war there is no strategical crime equal to that of inaction dictated by timidity.

CHAPTER X

THE POSSIBLE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS—THE DEFEAT OF THE HOSTILE NAVY

Methods by which the British can force the enemy to his knees—British offensive power—Indirect naval offensive—Raids—Conquest of colonies—Prospect of obtaining allies—Subsidies—Number of troops Great Britain must put into the field if she hopes to obtain allies—Possibility that enemy may obtain allies—Japanese assistance in Asia—Numbers of troops which will probably be required by Great Britain in various eventualities—Urgent necessity for military reforms.

A HOSTILE nation in arms which from any cause finds itself at war with Great Britain before its preparations are finally complete, and which fails to surprise the British fleet, will, under present conditions, face the almost certain prospect of initial defeat at sea. It is true that it may withdraw its fleets into their harbours and refuse to accept battle; but, as history shows, a navy, equally with an army, which admits its inferiority quickly becomes demoralised, and as time progresses is reduced to impotence. In such a case, Great Britain will remain temporary mistress of the sea; and will probably, in course of time, firmly establish her supremacy. The problem she will then be called on to solve will be: How can she oblige the enemy to sue for peace?

The British fleets will quickly destroy the enemy's

sea-borne commerce, or even bombard some of his undefended seaports and coast towns. The hostile defended seaports will certainly be closely watched ; and any attempt of the hostile fleets to put to sea will be welcomed as affording an opportunity for the destruction of those fleets. It may even be that the British will venture to throw a small expedition on to the hostile coast with the object of seizing some undefended port in which hostile ships of war may take refuge ; but, in view of her limited resources in trained soldiers, any attempt to capture a fortified harbour will be foredoomed to failure. Or, again, Great Britain can undertake the conquest of her adversary's colonies.

British offensive operations will, in fact, like those of the Athenians, be limited to the indirect offensive operations which can be executed by a navy ; insignificant raids into the hostile home territory ; and the conquest of the enemy's colonies.

An indirect naval offensive, such as the destruction of the hostile commerce, or raids into the enemy's territory, though they may incommode and weaken a nation in arms, will hardly be calculated to "smite" him down. The principal value of such operations must always lie in the fact that they tend to distract the enemy's attention and to weaken him at the real point of attack. They are, indeed, threats and demonstrations at vulnerable points. As adjuncts to a decisive blow at a vital point they are invaluable ; but alone, by themselves, they are practically useless.

It is probable that the prospect of the inevitable loss of Algeria and Tunis may cause the French nation to sue for peace ; but, on the other hand, it is equally possible that it may merely induce them to make more strenuous exertions. And, in any case, even if they sue for peace, their object will probably be to gain time for recuperation, and to strike again, as they did in 1778, at a more favourable opportunity. The conquest of German colonies will not be calculated to have the smallest effect on the ultimate result of a war with that nation. The defeat of the Russian army on the frontiers of India, unless accompanied by revolution in Russia itself, will by no means oblige the Russian nation to submit.

The defeat of the fleets of the United States will hardly induce that nation to sue for peace so long as there exists the possibility that it can recoup itself for its losses by the conquest of Canada.

Great Britain, in fact, cannot undertake any offensive operations which can justly be expected to force the submission of a hostile nation in arms ; while her long-continued blockade, if it be feasible, of the hostile ports will assuredly lead to friction and war with neutral nations. The only means by which Great Britain can hope to bring the war to a successful termination will be to organise herself as a machine of war, with a view to an offensive into the hostile home territory, or to obtain the assistance of other nations to strike the decisive blow for her.

Great Britain has, in the past, successfully adopted

the second method. In all her wars against France in the eighteenth century, as well as in the Napoleonic wars, except that of 1778-83, Great Britain obtained allies by means of subsidies. But in that of 1778, France, having determined, quite in the style of the modern nation in arms, on concentrating her full energies against Great Britain alone, easily avoided friction with her neighbours on land, and even herself obtained allies. Modern continental nations in arms watch the national interest in a scientific spirit ; and it seems improbable to a degree that any one of them will be induced by motives of philanthropy to take up the cudgels on behalf of Great Britain.¹ A nation in arms will, as we have seen, have more to gain by the destruction of a vast and ill-defended empire than by a stern struggle with a machine of war similar to itself.

Or is there any reason to suppose that a modern nation in arms will, on payment of a subsidy, engage in war with an adversary which is possibly more powerful than itself? It seems improbable, unless some deep cause of quarrel previously exist. Modern war is a costly game ; and a modern nation, with a lively recollection of previous defeats, will hardly risk the horrors of invasion for a paltry £100,000,000.

It may, surely, safely be asserted that a nation in arms will only go to war with a powerful neighbour, which is also a machine of war, in defence of its very

¹ Philanthropy could not induce Great Britain and France to protect Denmark in 1864.

existence, or if confident that, in conjunction with an ally, it can assume the offensive and throw the burden of war on the common adversary. Practical Frenchmen are to-day asking themselves to what the *entente cordiale* with Great Britain may lead. They are arriving at the conclusion that, if allied with Great Britain against Germany, France will bear all the punishment ; but that, if allied with Germany, she will participate in the benefits. There is, indeed, a strong party in France which advocates an alliance with Germany. It is, apparently, the military party ; and it is but natural that men who regard war from a practical standpoint should prefer to fight in alliance with an efficient, rather than with an inefficient, nation.

As to the number of land forces which will be required by Great Britain if she would hope to gain allies, such will naturally be a matter of arrangement with possible allies. But we can, nevertheless, form a fair estimate from the numbers employed by Great Britain in her wars against French supremacy ; and more especially is this the case when we consider that Great Britain's next great war will probably be fought in resistance to an attempt to establish another domination in Europe.

In 1702, Marlborough took the field in the Netherlands with 10,000 British troops, 20,000 Dutch troops, and about 20,000 German mercenaries. As the war progressed, the number of British troops was steadily increased.

In the French revolutionary wars, Great Britain, in

1793, despatched 20,000 men to Holland, where they were reinforced by 10,000 Hessians and Hanoverians in English pay. The total allied armies numbered 365,000; while the French forces in the field numbered 270,000, a fresh levy of 300,000 having been ordered.

In 1794, as Alison tells us, the French Republic possessed 1,200,000 men under arms, of which 700,000 were available. In this same year, the House of Commons voted an army of 140,000 men, including fencibles and militia, while both the Prussians and Austrians were in the field.

In 1796, when threatened with invasion, Great Britain maintained 109,000 regulars, 63,000 militia, 150,000 volunteers, and 100,000 seamen.

In 1797, the land forces of Great Britain amounted to 190,000, of whom 60,000 were in Great Britain, the remainder in the colonies.

In 1799, the French introduced conscription, every Frenchman between the ages of twenty and forty-five being rendered liable to serve. 200,000 men were called out, contingents of 20,000 from Holland and Switzerland were demanded, while 35,000 were in Egypt. Of this total force of 275,000, only about 170,000 were available.

In the following year, the British forces numbered 168,000 regulars, 80,000 militia, and 120,000 seamen. France took the field in this same year with about 200,000.

In 1802, the Peace of Amiens was concluded; and

Napoleon prepared for a naval war, intending six or eight years later to attack Great Britain. Maritime conscription was introduced.

In 1803, when war again broke out, the British population numbered 17,000,000, the French 40,000,000. The French army numbered 420,000; the British forces 300,000 regulars and militia, 340,000 volunteers, and 100,000 seamen.

In 1805, the French armies in the field, increased by German and Bavarian contingents, numbered 270,000, a fresh levy of 80,000 conscripts being ordered. It was in this year that Napoleon prepared an army of 150,000 men at Boulogne for the invasion of England, confident that, if he could but transport them across the sea, the country would, in spite of the numbers of its half-trained fighting men, lie at his mercy. How nearly his project succeeded is apparent to all who have studied the naval campaign of Trafalgar.

In 1807, Great Britain despatched an expedition of 20,000 men to assist Prussia and Russia; but they arrived too late to be of any value. In this same year she sent 20,000 men to seize the Danish fleet; these were reinforced by 10,000 who had been operating with the Swedes in Pomerania.

In 1808, when the French invaded Spain, the forces were as follows: 600,000 French troops, together with 150,000 from the states under French control; 180,000 British regulars, "80,000 militia for home service, nearly equal to the troops of the line," and

290,000 volunteers. Of the regulars, 100,000 were available, the remainder being required for colonial garrisons.

In 1809, Great Britain despatched 40,000 men on the Walcheren expedition. In this same year, the British forces numbered, 210,000 regulars, 80,000 militia, and 130,000 seamen, in addition to volunteers. Alison tells us that "in this campaign of 1809, Great Britain first appeared in the field on a scale adequate to her mighty strength, though her success was not yet equal to the magnitude of her exertions. With a fleet of near 1100 vessels, including 240 of the line, she blockaded every hostile harbour in Europe, and still had thirty-seven ships of the line to strike a blow at the Scheldt. With 100,000 regular troops she maintained her immense colonial empire; with 191,000 more she kept in subjection her 70,000,000 of Indian subjects; with 400,000 regulars and local militia she guarded the British Isles; and with yet another 100,000 disposable troops she carried on the war on the Continent, and menaced at once Antwerp, Madrid, and Naples."

In 1812, the French army numbered 1,200,000, of which 850,000 were native French, 300,000 being in Spain. At the end of 1813, at the time of the invasion of France, the British forces numbered 1,053,000, made up of 140,000 seamen and marines, the remainder, including 40,000 Canadian militia, being land forces. The continental forces which actually invaded France numbered 340,000 on the

eastern frontier, and 140,000 on the southern frontier, of whom about 50,000 were British. Great Britain, in fact, co-operated in the invasion with about one-tenth of the total force of invaders.

It will thus be seen that, in 1794, shortly after the outbreak of the French revolutionary wars, the British land forces were about one-half of those of the French. With the increase of the French forces, the British land forces were steadily increased, and augmented by large numbers of volunteers. This force was steadily increased, until in 1804 it became numerically superior to the native French forces, and this, notwithstanding the fact that the French population was more than double that of the British. An equality in numbers was maintained to the end of the war. It is true that, of these land forces, about one-half were intended to resist invasion only, and were therefore, as it turned out, practically valueless. If in place of her volunteers and militia Great Britain had raised her regular army to 500,000 highly trained men, or rather more than one-half the number of the hostile armies, there is no doubt that she would not only have been safe from invasion, but that she could, at any time after Trafalgar, when Napoleon was engaged in Central Europe, have struck a decisive blow with 200,000 men at the vital point of her enemy, and saved Europe many years of desolation and misery.

At the present day, the British land forces number about 1,000,000, of whom the regular forces alone

are fitted to face the troops of a nation in arms. Her land forces remain, in fact, in practically the same condition as they were in the Napoleonic wars. The armies of the great continental nations, however, have increased until they number, at war strength, from three to four millions of men, while they maintain between 500,000 and 600,000 men always available for immediate action. It must also not be forgotten that the native populations to be held in subjection by British troops number to-day over 350,000,000, as compared with the 70,000,000 of the Napoleonic era. It thus seems but fair to infer that in a future war with a continental power which seeks to establish its supremacy, and which is consequently attacked by the rest of Europe, Great Britain must, if she wishes to bring the war to a rapid and successful conclusion, and to save Europe untold misery, be prepared to put into the field in Europe a highly trained land force of about one-quarter of the hostile land force, that is, from 750,000 to 1,000,000 men.

In the Seven Years War, Great Britain paid an annual subsidy of £670,000 for four years to Frederick the Great. In the Napoleonic wars, she was paying subsidies of £3,000,000 to £6,000,000. It seems that we may fairly argue that, if she is content to leave the continental powers to strike the decisive blows, she must be prepared to furnish numerous subsidies, each one to the amount of perhaps fifty to one hundred million pounds, and to place and maintain in the field, possibly for some

years, a force proportionate to the army she placed in the Peninsula, that is, about one twenty-fourth of the hostile force, or 125,000 men. These are the forces Great Britain will probably be called on to furnish in addition to her oversea garrisons, if she hopes to act the part of a "fly-wheel" to the European political machinery. But then, again, it must not be forgotten that the Spanish peninsula was eminently suited as a theatre for the military operations of an island power; and we should be over-optimistic if we assumed that a similar theatre would offer itself in any future war.

But if Great Britain is deliberately attacked by a continental power, and wishes to obtain allies, she must guarantee to that ally such land reinforcements as will enable it to carry the war into the hostile territory. It seems probable that 1,000,000 highly trained men is no exaggerated estimate. It seems probable that this latter is the nature of the next great war in which Great Britain will be engaged.

A long-continued single-handed struggle between Great Britain and a continental power, with the inevitable friction which will arise between Great Britain—if she seeks to execute a naval offensive, that is, to destroy the hostile commerce, to blockade the hostile ports, and those of neutral nations—will prove more irksome and injurious to Great Britain than to the enemy. Great Britain cannot, under present conditions, conduct a war economically; she pays the penalty for her unreadiness by a vast and ill-

considered expenditure in time of emergency. The "peace-at-any-price" party in Great Britain will daily gain in power, and it seems probable that Great Britain will be the first to sue for peace. The conclusion of peace will also be to the interest of the hostile power, for it will have missed its spring, and will hardly hope to achieve decisive results except with the assistance of other powers, which assistance might possibly not be forthcoming, and which, in any case, must be paid for. It will probably prefer to make peace if it can be accomplished on easy terms and without loss of prestige, and thereafter complete its preparations with a view to the future, confident that no corresponding scientific preparation, which would involve national regeneration, could take place so far as Great Britain was concerned in the time available. It seems that we are justified in the belief that a war in which Great Britain wins initial success on the sea will probably be indecisive in its results, but that another and more decisive war will occur a few years later.

But the possibility that the hostile power may form alliances must not be forgotten. It is no impossible contingency to suppose that war may break out between Great Britain on the one hand, and Russia and Germany, or Germany and Turkey, on the other. Or the United States may be found in alliance with either France or Germany. In any of these eventualities Great Britain will be called on to fight on land in defence of India, Canada, or Egypt and the Suez

Canal. It is true that the alliance between Great Britain and Japan will become operative in the case of India. But it is quite absurd to suppose that the Japanese will be content to defend India for the British people; that she will assist loyally may be taken for granted, but that she will undertake all the hard fighting on land while the British look on is past belief. Or, again, if the British intend a passive defence of India, and trust to a Japanese offensive in the Far East to force Russia to relinquish her designs, she will, it seems apparent, have but little warrant for her faith. For in handing Manchuria back to the Chinese,¹ Japan has relinquished a great part of her offensive power. But the conquest of India will more than recoup the Russians for the loss of Vladivostok or, indeed, of Eastern Siberia. An offensive calculated to force Russia to relinquish her designs on India—supposing she holds them—must be directed against some vital point, that is, from the Baltic, the Black Sea, or the Persian Gulf. The Japanese can hardly be expected to discard their offensive operations against Vladivostok in order to assist in operations many thousand miles distant from their own country, because the British people prefer not to fight themselves. Friendship has its limitations. There exists also the by no means impossible contingency that war between Great Britain and Russia may break out when the Japanese are fully engaged with the United States.

¹ This has, however, not yet been effected.

It is thus the case that, if Russia is not deterred by the Anglo-Japanese alliance, but elects to proceed with her designs, the British people will be obliged, notwithstanding their alliance with Japan, to organise a force for offensive operations in Russia or from the Persian Gulf. It must not be forgotten, moreover, that the British in India are aliens holding in subjection a native population of over 300,000,000, and that a defensive attitude on the part of these aliens—that is, the expression of fear or a confession of weakness—will assuredly result in uprisings and revolution. In defence of India, Great Britain must be prepared to strike first, and boldly, and decisively.

There is no reason why, some ten years hence, or even sooner, Russia, with her vast resources in men, should not commence a movement against India with an army of half a million to a million of men, and, at the same time, maintain a powerful garrison in Eastern Siberia.¹ If, when that time comes, the Japanese find that the British have adopted no measures by which they can put into force their part of the bargain, we may safely assume that they will utilise the alliance for their own purposes, will

¹ Lord Roberts pointed out in his speech to the London Chamber of Commerce on August 1st, 1905, that the Russians had been able to maintain half a million of men in Manchuria, between 5000 and 6000 miles distant from St. Petersburg, with only a single line of railway to work on; and he asserts that "we cannot calculate on the possibility of less than that number being placed in the fighting line south of the Oxus," which is only about half the above distance from St. Petersburg and is connected with Russia by two railway lines.

take Vladivostok, but leave India and the British Empire to look after themselves. It will be difficult, moreover, to blame them.

We may assert, without fear of contradiction by any educated soldier, that if Great Britain is called on to defend India against the Russians, she must be in a position to place and maintain in the field land forces of 750,000 to 1,000,000 trained white men, and it is probable that this number will prove to be all too few.¹

It is quite idle to speculate on the possibility or impossibility of the invasion of India by the Russians. If India constitutes a line of least resistance, the invasion of that country is merely a matter of time, and security is only to be found in a state of perfect readiness for war on the part of Great Britain or, possibly, of the British Empire. If the British people refuse to make the necessary preparations, they would do wisely to perfect their arrangements for the evacuation of India when the time comes; for it is the height of folly to fight for anything except with the resolute determination to win.

¹ Lord Roberts, in the above speech, said: "In the event, therefore, of a war with Russia in the direction of Afghanistan, it is imperative we should have at our disposal a force superior to that which could be brought against us; and this number should, I think, be independent of the contingent which the native army could provide; for that army, or its equivalent in strength, would be needed to impress the frontier tribes and the Afghans, whose attitude will inevitably be more or less uncertain until they see which side is most likely to win, and are able to decide which side it would be most to their advantage to join."

In the unfortunate, and at present improbable, contingency of a war with the United States, Great Britain will assuredly be attacked by one or more European powers. If successful at sea, she will be bound, not only in honour, but in her own interest, to despatch troops to the assistance of Canada. In such a war, the people of the United States may be expected to display a similar enthusiasm to that they displayed in the War of Secession. Her soldiers—under present conditions—will probably number about 100,000 trained men, supported by over a million partially trained men; that is, good rifle shots, but without trained officers.

For the defence of their country, the Canadians will probably place from 200,000 to 300,000 partially trained men, probably with but few trained officers, in the field.¹ It seems questionable, however, whether arms and ammunition will be forthcoming for this number of men. If Great Britain hopes to win victory she will find it necessary to place, at the very least, 500,000 trained men in the field, if possible at the decisive moment, the outbreak of hostilities.

Or, again, it is possible, probable indeed, that in the event of war between Great Britain and Germany, Turkey will be found allied to Germany. The effec-

¹ "A definite plan is now accepted by the Canadian Government and the Canadian people. In time of emergency a force of 100,000 men is to be available, provided with the necessary auxiliary troops. Some plan, less clearly conceived, exists for reinforcing this 'first line' by a second line of 100,000." ("The Canadian Militia," *Morning Post*, 6th November, 1905.)

tive war strength of the Turkish army is about 1,000,000 men, posted within striking distance of the Suez Canal, the most vulnerable overland line of communication of the British Empire, as well as a principal trade route to the east.¹ It is true that Great Britain's sea power will enable her to strike direct at Constantinople, the vital point of the Turkish Empire, and thereby recall the Turkish forces from any attempt at Egypt or the Suez Canal. But such a blow to be effective must be weighty ; a mere threat by 50,000 to 100,000 men will prove useless ; it must be delivered in sufficient force to ensure the assistance of the Bulgarians and the Greeks ; and for this purpose it is probable that Great Britain will require not less than 300,000 men. It is, however, true that France will hardly stand aside and watch without concern a Turkish domination of the Suez Canal and Egypt ; but then, on the other hand, there is the threat of invasion from Germany to be considered. If, thus, Great Britain finds herself involved in war with Germany allied to Turkey, and if she herself wishes to obtain allies, she will probably find it necessary to place and maintain in the field land forces numbering from 1,300,000 to 1,500,000 highly trained men. If Germany is allied to Russia in addition to Turkey, a combination which is by no means beyond the

¹ The contention that Egypt and the Suez Canal are sufficiently protected by the deserts to the north can hardly be admitted. Egypt has been invaded and conquered from the north by the "Shepherd Kings," the Assyrians, the Persians, the Macedonians, the Arabians, the Saracens, and the Turks.

bounds of possibility, these numbers must be vastly increased. To maintain such a force in the field organised and trained armies numbering 3,000,000 men, at least, will be necessary.

It is evidently no exaggeration to assert that if Great Britain finds herself involved in war with a nation in arms which has made careful preparation for war, that war will be a veritable struggle for existence on the part of the British people, far more so, indeed, than was the case in the Napoleonic wars. We have ventured the attempt to draw attention to the main outlines of such a struggle, and to point out that, in Great Britain's present disadvantageous circumstances, she can only, at the best, hope to bring the war to an indecisive conclusion, facing the prospect of another and more serious war a few years later, while, at the worst, she must face the prospect of destruction. It is beyond question the case that the present scheme of army reorganisation, based on voluntary effort, and in which the national army of 300,000 men is to be trained after the outbreak of hostilities, is wholly inadequate to meet the requirements of the next struggle in which Great Britain will probably be engaged. It is no extravagant notion to assert that in such a contest the mere existence of the British people will inexorably demand the utmost efforts of every man of the nation. It is most obvious that the vast problems in connexion with such a struggle can only be worked out by a trained staff of military experts, and that if these problems are intended

to lie outside the province of the newly formed General Staff, the prospect of success dwindles to utter insignificance. There are those, however, who urge that Great Britain has often "muddled through," and that she may be trusted to do so again. These men have failed to grasp the significance of the modern nation in arms, the scientifically constructed machine of war, or the fact that modern history has commenced.

Before we conclude this chapter, let us enumerate shortly the measures which the British people will be obliged to adopt after the outbreak of hostilities—if they fail to make adequate preparation in peace time—as the only possible means by which they can hope to safeguard the national existence.

1. To call on His Majesty the King to assume absolute authority.

2. To mobilise the national army.

3. To proclaim and enforce martial law.

4. To enrol the unemployed, starving, and unemployable, finding officers, so far as possible, from the educated classes.

5. To organise the whole manhood of the nation, irrespective of age and whether able-bodied or otherwise.

6. To introduce universal service as soon as possible, and to train assiduously all the men of the nation.

7. To organise the national resources of every description.

8. To display self-restraint, to avoid unnecessary discussion, to refrain from disclosing the numbers and

positions of the armed forces to the enemy, to suppress the liberty of the press and politicians, and to treat mercilessly any hostile spies or traitors who, even in the most indirect ways, assist the enemy.

9. To suppress, if necessary by force, the peace party.

There exists the bare possibility that, if these measures are adopted immediately on the outbreak of hostilities, the regular forces will be able to gain time for the nation to attain military efficiency. It is, however, improbable ; for it is more probable that the national resources and spirit will break down under the strain. If that occurs, or if these measures are not adopted in time, we can lay down the probabilities :—

1. A revolution of the unemployable and starving, notwithstanding the victory of the navy.

2. A period of anarchy.

3. A military despotism—"militarism."

4. A temporary peace.

5. War a few years later, probably accompanied by invasion.

6. The reduction of the British nation to a third-rate power, its insignificance, and the jealousies of the neighbours, the only guarantees of its existence.

No man with the smallest knowledge of war, or with a shadow of patriotism in his composition, will deny that it is an urgent and vital necessity to seek for the remedy for the present state of national and military inefficiency, and for the means by which that remedy can be applied, before it is too late.

CHAPTER XI

THE REMEDY

Organisation as a nation in arms necessary—Outlines of the required organisation—Necessity for immediate action—Nature of training—Oversea garrisons—French system—Cost of universal service—Compulsory universal service—Voluntary universal service—Period of service necessary for the attainment of efficiency—Training of officers.

LET us always keep in view Great Britain's ultimate object if she hopes to win decisive success. It must be to put into effect the principle of success in war, that is, to invade the enemy's home territory with the whole available force which she, in conjunction with the colonies and allies, can bring into line. Her immediate object must be to establish supremacy on the sea betwixt herself and her adversary, as the only means whereby she can reach across the sea to strike. And she must also endeavour to hold the sea communications between herself and the colonies, in order to ensure the safe transport of possible reinforcements, to guard and increase her own commerce, to destroy that of the enemy, and to cut him from his oversea resources. If, however, Great Britain can strike, either single-handed or in conjunction with allies, at a vital point of the enemy, she will, by that means alone, oblige him to discard his offensive

operations and to concentrate all his force for his own defence. A blow at a vital point of the enemy is consequently the best, if not the only, safeguard for the British oversea communications as well as for her commerce. It is, indeed, a truism that an extended frontier must be defended by offensive strokes ; and there is no nation with so extended a frontier as that of the British Empire.

But it is only a nation in arms, or a modern machine of war, which can hope to strike single-handed with the smallest prospect of success at another nation in arms. It is now, indeed, since the Russo-Japanese War, a recognised military platitude that a nation in arms is the only organisation which can hope to resist successfully the onset of a nation in arms. That organisation as a true nation in arms is the only possible remedy for British inefficiency must surely be only too clear.

The nation in arms is, broadly speaking, organised as follows :—¹

1. A general staff and an organised system of national leadership.
2. Sea forces—an active navy, an active reserve, a sedentary reserve.
3. Land forces—an active army, an active reserve, a sedentary reserve.
4. Oversea garrisons—garrisons with their reserves, so far as possible, domiciled in the country.

Of these Great Britain possesses the following :—

¹ See statement at end of chapter.

1. An active navy which, at the present time at least, is probably of sufficient strength. In the absence of proof to the contrary—a proof which can only be furnished by the test of war—it may be regarded as the most efficient in existence.

2. A so-called active, or “standing,” army. This army is employed in the maintenance of oversea garrisons and for small expeditions. As a force with which to strike single-handed at a nation in arms it is, practically, non-existent. The optimist will claim that in fighting efficiency it is the equal of its own numbers—that is, when its immature recruits have been replaced by reservists. Its numbers are, however, quite insignificant,¹ while its education, organisation, and training are, as yet, far from perfect.

3. Sedentary reserves—militia, yeomanry, and volunteers—a heterogeneous mass of infantry and mounted men, unorganised, partly disciplined, partly officered, practically untrained, without staff, transport, or artillery. These are now to be organised as a national army, but are to remain practically untrained until after the outbreak of hostilities.

If, therefore, the British people are to be organised as a nation in arms, the following are required :—

1. A general staff and an organised system of national leadership.

¹ 160,000 to be organised as an expeditionary force, of which a portion, the non-combatant elements, is to be “trained on a militia basis.”

2. Sea forces—an active reserve and a sedentary reserve.

3. Land forces—an active army and an active reserve, numbering together some 2,000,000 men.

It is evident that the primary consideration is the formation of a general staff, not only for the land and sea forces, but for the conduct of national strategy; for until the system of national leadership has been organised on scientific lines, and the great national problems finally withdrawn from the region of party politics, nothing can be accomplished. A clear distinction must, in fact, be made between external war and class warfare; and more attention must be paid to the former if success would be hoped for.

As regards the armed forces, it is immediately apparent that the militia, or the new national army that is to be, with its territorial organisation, is best adapted for the formation of the active forces, both land and sea, cavalry, infantry, and artillery; while the existing volunteers and yeomanry are equally adapted for the formation of the sedentary forces. But before the militia, or the national army, can be converted into active forces, it will have to fulfil the following requirements:—

1. Liability to serve either on land or sea without pay.

2. Liability to serve abroad in time of war.

3. Liability to continuous service in peace time for the necessary period of training.

4. Liability to service at a specified age.¹

And similarly, with the volunteers and yeomanry, the sedentary reserves.

If thus the able-bodied youth of the nation can be compelled, or induced, to enter the militia at a specified age and for the necessary period, and if the above alterations in the conditions of service can be effected, the nation can ultimately be constituted as a modern nation in arms or machine of war.

It appears, however, to be considered—and this opinion is apparently held by British statesmen and politicians almost without exception—that the introduction of universal service can be deferred until after the outbreak of a life-and-death struggle. It is not a view which will commend itself to thoughtful men, either to those who wish to see their nation great, in the forefront of progress, even though that position is won by war, or to those who hate war, and maintain that the first duty of a nation is to live in friendliness with its neighbours. In the absence of a police force

¹ It will be noted that Mr. Arnold Forster's scheme for army reorganisation, in which he hoped to form a home army consisting of the militia (with liability to serve abroad) and a portion of the regular army, was practically an attempt to convert the militia into an active army. The same holds true of the "military cone," or national army, which is merely another name for the home army. It seems possible that, if the exigencies of the situation had been laid fully before the people, great results might, by this time, have been achieved. Unfortunately, though both the present and the late government appear dimly to recognise the necessity of an active army, they apparently fear to tell the people the truth. There is the risk of being driven from power to be considered.

to guard the morals of nations, it is readiness for war, the balance of force, which keeps the peace. An unready or inefficient nation is a sure cause of war. A struggle for supremacy between Great Britain and Germany, for instance, has now, for a long time, been regarded by many men as inevitable. If our conception of the struggle for national existence is true, then war between these two nations is inevitable unless the British nation can introduce reform and ensure military efficiency in time. It is possible that earnest preparation for war on the part of the British people may yet avert war ; but every day that the commencement of such preparation is delayed renders war more certain.

The attempt to introduce efficiency after the outbreak of war will come too late ; for the formation of a machine of war cannot be accomplished in a day. The education of the whole people, the impulsion of the vast inert mass of obstruction towards reform, the eradication of obsolete and deep-rooted sentiments and prejudices, the inculcation of patriotism into that large class, which always exists in every inefficient nation, whose interests are bound up with national inefficiency, must require at least a generation of strenuous effort. The nation in arms does not burst into flower like a geranium. For over thirty years the French nation has sought to perfect its system ; but, hampered as its exertions have been by disunion and political intrigue, has it yet been entirely successful ?

To obtain the services of the able-bodied youth of the country is but one, though the first and most im-

portant, step towards the creation of a nation in arms ; but it is only when the whole organisation has been perfected and finally completed as a machine of war that a nation, like Germany, can look forward to the prospect of war with comparative composure. Until the British nation is formed as a machine of war, British sailors and soldiers, even if the able-bodied youth of the country elect to serve, must display extreme excellence in the martial qualities, in the hope that their science, courage, and devotion may counter-balance the disadvantages of unscientific national leadership, lack of discipline and unity of purpose and the other martial qualities in the nation at large. Until the nation has been modernised, security can only be found in a higher order of training in the armed forces. The real problem before the British people is not which is the least irksome form of national service, but whether, straining every nerve, they can introduce the necessary reforms in time. It is a question whether it is not already too late ; for hostile powers, if such exist, can hardly be expected to view with unconcern British efforts to evolve order out of chaos, efficiency from inefficiency.

It is evidently extremely desirable that Great Britain's armed forces, both on sea and land, should be overwhelmingly superior to those of any possible adversary ; but so Utopian an ideal, in view of Great Britain's limited resources in men, is clearly impracticable—unless, indeed, the whole of the English-speaking races could be organised as a vast machine of

war. There seems, however, but little prospect that so desirable an ideal can ever be attained. Even the federation of the British Empire appears to be "impossible"—under the present system of national leadership—in spite of the goodwill of the colonies. In the meantime, the inhabitants of the United Kingdom must, like other nations, rest content to organise every available resource and to seek for superiority over their possible enemies by a more complete state of efficiency as a machine of war, or, it is probable, cease to exist as an independent state. Being an island power, the land forces, whether furnished by Great Britain alone or by the empire at large, will be powerless to strike until the sea forces have gained control of the sea; it is evident, therefore, that the nation must seek, primarily, to maintain an overwhelming naval force immediately available, and that the residue of her male population must be organised for land warfare.

The problem as to whether the land force should be immediately available is somewhat complex. On the one hand, war is full of constant surprises; it is the unexpected—though not so much in modern days, since war has been treated as a science, as in the past—which occurs. On the other hand, the maintenance of force immediately available is costly. In the case in which the initial struggle for the command of the sea takes place, the land forces may not be required for weeks, months, or even years. But, again, a decision may be reached in the course of a few days or a few weeks; who can say? In the

latter event, defeat may result from the fact that the land forces are not ready. Success in modern war demands careful calculation and methodical and scientific preparation ; it is unsafe to trust to Fortune. Though Fortune is constantly saddled with many failures which are due solely to lack of forethought, yet she is certainly a jade who will upset all but the best-laid plans ; it is for science to win in despite, and not with the assistance, of Fortune. The land forces should, without doubt, be immediately available to at least as great an extent as is the case with possible adversaries. Especially is this so until national efficiency has been finally assured.

We now ask ourselves : Is there any system which would be less costly or less irksome than that of a nation in arms according to the accepted sense ? It is easy to conceive many systems which would be less irksome,—such, for instance, as that lately devised,—but which would fall far short of it in economy and efficiency. There are those, for instance, who argue that if the boys of Great Britain receive a military training at school, the necessity for universal service will be obviated. But these fail to appreciate the value of organisation and of realistic training for war. Peace training must be as realistic as possible, with all the hardships and strain for a limited period of actual war. Boys cannot face the efforts which require the strength of full-grown men, and no amount of theoretical instruction can teach a man his duty as a soldier. The idea that the training of boys

at school can compensate for the lack of an organised machine of men cannot be too clearly exposed as a dangerous fallacy ; and only those who have never faced the hardships of war, who have no conception of the true significance of the expression, or who fear that the British people are so foolish that they will never be brought to accept any other reform, would venture to suggest such an expedient. That the training of boys at school, as an accessory to universal service, is invaluable, is beyond question. It is the course adopted by nations in arms. For such instruction will send men to the colours partly trained, with a knowledge of the duties they will be called on to perform, and a desire to excel. Such a system will enable a considerable reduction to be made in the period of training with the colours without loss of efficiency, but the formation of the nation as a machine of war is the first step towards so ideal a state.

And neither will a training of the people to a use of the rifle, without a corresponding organisation and discipline, render the nation efficient for purposes of war. Except as a first step, as a means whereby patriotism may be inculcated, it is indeed to be deprecated ; for, like the present system of volunteers in Great Britain, it is calculated to lead the people to believe, on insufficient grounds, that they are fitted to withstand the organised and disciplined hosts of a nation in arms, and thus to arouse a sentiment of misplaced confidence which usually proves fatal.

And there are, again, those who suggest that all men should be compelled to serve in the militia or volunteers as they at present exist. Here we have another idea which disregards the vital consideration of efficiency for the purpose in view, which is war. For if men are to be compelled to serve for one or two months annually in the militia, or for a few days or weeks at a time in the volunteers, it is unnecessary to state that the training they receive will be, for all practical purposes, quite valueless. But, it will be argued, this is the very system which the Swiss have adopted; and their army is, surely, thoroughly efficient. The Swiss themselves, however—in spite of the adulations of the foreign military attachés who have witnessed their manœuvres—appear to have doubts; for the periods of service are now, at the end of 1906, to be increased. If such a system, however, in conjunction with the training of boys at an early age, had been adopted by the British nation shortly after 1870, while the acute hostility between Germany and France would have ensured the assistance of allies, efficiency might by this time have been obtained. It is now, however—if war is to be expected in 1920—too late to adopt this system. For, assuming that 300,000 boys annually attain eight years of age, that their training at school then commences, and that, of these, 250,000, on attaining the able-bodied age, are fit for service, then, twelve years after the inauguration of this system, there would be 250,000 fairly trained men available. In another twelve years this number

would be increased (not allowing for wastage) to 3,000,000. Twenty-four years at least will thus be required before the requisite numbers can be obtained.

If, on the other hand, men are to serve for a continuous period of such duration as will enable them to acquire the necessary proficiency, why not adopt some simple system of organisation and continuous service such as that in vogue with the great nations in arms? In any case, any system must be worthless unless men can be compelled to fight when the time comes, and to fight abroad.

It seems but too evident that the system which has been adopted by these nations in arms is not only the most efficient, but also the least costly and the least irksome which can be found; for we must remember that these nations have, in most cases, under the stress of circumstances, sought diligently to find a solution which should fulfil these very conditions. That universal service bears somewhat hardly on some people cannot be denied; but the burden is cheerfully accepted by nations in arms lest worse befall, and there is ample reason to suppose that the system is far less irksome than the British people have brought themselves, or have been taught, to believe.

We thus arrive at the unavoidable conclusion that Great Britain—so far as concerns her naval forces, and the land forces she must maintain for offensive strokes—cannot do better than adopt in principle the system which has been adopted by all nations in arms—that

is, continuous service in the active force, commencing at the able-bodied age, until the man has attained proficiency, and service in the active reserve for the necessary period before transfer to the sedentary reserves.

But as regards the garrisons for the oversea possessions, the point admits of further discussion.

Assuming that the British people adopt the system of universal service, how are the necessary garrisons for her oversea possessions to be obtained?

France, a nation in arms, which also holds large oversea possessions, has been forced to give mature consideration to this problem. The manner in which she has dealt with it is as follows :—

As regards Algeria and Tunis, she obtains the required troops partly by means of compulsory service and partly by means of voluntary enlistment. But Algeria and Tunis, though oversea possessions, are yet adjacent to the home territory, and we shall find a better example in her garrison in Indo-China.

In Indo-China, France maintains a force numbering 43,700 men, made up as follows :—¹

European troops—14,550.

Native troops (European officers and non-commissioned officers)—19,150.

Native provincial militia for police work (European officers)—10,000.

The *Handbook of the French Army* tells us that the colonial army is recruited by means of—

¹ *Statesman's Year Book*, 1905.

(a) Voluntary enlistment (both Europeans and natives).

(b) Colonial contingents (young men domiciled in certain colonies, who are liable to service in those colonies, and a native contingent in Madagascar).

(c) Incorporation of men of the metropolitan contingent (for home service only).

We also find that "the foreign legion, African light infantry, Algerian tirailleurs, and disciplinary companies may always be used for service in the colonies."¹

We thus see that the French hesitate to adopt the principle of the employment of compulsorily enlisted men for garrison duties in a far distant colony; and that, as a consequence, they have been obliged to rest content with a heterogeneous army, a makeshift, which though suitable for the work it may be called on to perform—such as small expeditions and to hold the native inhabitants in subjection—would certainly prove unequal to the task of facing the troops of the active army of a nation in arms—such as the Japanese, for instance. While, therefore, such a makeshift may

¹ The African light infantry "are recruited from men who have been convicted of civil offences either during their service or before enlistment, also from men who, having been convicted of military offences, misconduct themselves during their imprisonment." The Algerian tirailleurs "are recruited by voluntary enlistment for four years' service, from natives of Algeria and Tunis." The disciplinary companies "are recruited from men of the active army who (a) have mutilated themselves with a view to exemption from or discharge from the military service; (b) men whose conduct is generally subversive of discipline."

be suitable for the French colony, it would hardly prove applicable to the garrison of India, which may be called on to face the Russian army.

We also see that the French have hesitated to adopt the principle of the compulsory service of the native inhabitants of their colonies, not only in Indo-China, but in Algeria and Tunis. The reason is not far to seek. The French do not hesitate, apparently, to face the fact that the native inhabitants of their colonies are naturally hostile; and that, in a moment of defeat and loss of prestige, this hostility is calculated to break out into open rebellion. It is therefore undesirable that they should be trained to the use of arms. It is evident, moreover, that if these vast native populations were organised and trained as machines of war, the overthrow of European supremacy would be but a matter of time. But, on the other hand, these populations furnish excellent military material which, if officered by men of the dominant race, supply loyal and inexpensive contingents eminently fitted for employment on small expeditions against half-armed frontier tribes or for police work generally, though their efficacy against European troops remains to be proved. The expediency of employing natives against Europeans is, however, for obvious reasons, open to doubt.

Thus, while it would be wasteful of the national resources to neglect entirely the available native military material, it is but wise to utilise it with considerable caution.

It is held in Great Britain that, as there exists no precedent of a nation which has garrisoned its distant oversea possessions by means of troops obtained under the system of compulsory service, the British people cannot be called on to do so. The train of thought continues to the effect that, in view of the vast oversea possessions held by Great Britain and of the large number of men required for garrison purposes, compulsory service is unsuitable to the needs of the British Empire, and that therefore the great bulk of Englishmen are absolved from the performance of any duty to their country. Is it to be believed that the German active army would hesitate to engage in oversea operations in South America, in South Africa, or in England, for example, if the vital interests of the nation demanded such a sacrifice? Would the French army refuse to operate in Egypt or, if necessary, in China? Did the Japanese deny the right of their leaders to carry them to Mukden, and would they have hesitated to march to Harbin? It is those who themselves have no desire to serve their country who ascribe such lack of patriotism to the bulk of their countrymen.

In ancient times the British people established their own precedents in patriotism; and though this excellent habit has, of late years, fallen into disuse, there would seem to be no particular reason why it should not be resuscitated. It is merely a matter of education. Notwithstanding that India is far distant from Great Britain, and that its climate in

certain parts is more trying to Europeans than that of Algeria, there yet seems no reason why the garrison should not be partly obtained by the system of compulsory service. In addition to numbers of pure-bred Britons, there is a considerable number of men, domiciled in India, of European extraction, who are proud to regard themselves as members of the dominant race. These men are, for the greater part, heartily disliked by the pure-bred natives; and they would be the first to suffer if the British supremacy were overthrown. Their interests are bound up with British interests; and their loyalty to Great Britain can consequently be depended on. These men could fairly be called on to justify their claim to be recognised as Englishmen by undergoing the same period of service as that performed by their compatriots. It seems probable, indeed, that if the principle of universal service were adopted in Great Britain, they would be the first to cry out and to claim their right as Englishmen to serve their country. If the above theory be correct, the contingent furnished by these men, together with its reserves domiciled in the country, should form a considerable force, and the problem of the garrison of India might be partially solved.¹

And, again, if universal service were finally adopted in Great Britain, and the situation as regards India and Egypt clearly explained to the British people, it

¹ The author has endeavoured, but failed, to ascertain the number of men of European extraction domiciled in India.

seems quite within the bounds of possibility that volunteers for service in these oversea possessions would be forthcoming in considerable numbers, who would consider themselves amply repaid for their patriotism by the knowledge, experience, and prestige they would gain by a few years' sojourn in countries of vast interest to the educated man. There is a large floating population of business men in India. Is there any doubt that young men about to enter upon business in India would prefer to serve in that country, and so gain a knowledge of it, rather than serve in England? The deficit, if it existed, might well be made up by volunteers from the English-speaking colonies; or, failing all else, by ballot in the home army.¹

Unless some such system as the above be adopted, Great Britain must be reduced to the expedient of forming a heterogeneous army such as that maintained by France in Indo-China—an army, partly or wholly, composed of mercenaries, and, for that reason alone, an inefficient army. It is beyond question the fact that the British garrison in India should be, in view of possible contingencies, thoroughly efficient. But this matter of oversea garrisons is, obviously, another problem for an expert general staff.

As regards the native army in India, the primary essential would seem to be that its loyalty to the

¹ With certain modifications, this system would apply equally to the other British oversea possessions. The principle, except for the matter of compulsion, has already been established in the present volunteer system in oversea possessions.

dominant race should be ensured ; and, with this object in view, its members should be taught to regard themselves as infinitely superior to their civilian compatriots.

Its numbers should be limited with a view to the following considerations :—

1. The number of men of the dominant race available as officers (after the requirements of the national forces have been met).

2. The number required for the fulfilment of the duties demanded of them.

3. Cost.

There are certain races in India whose loyalty to the dominant race has been proved in countless instances. If these races were permitted to adopt the system of universal service, their loyalty would probably be ensured and their utility considerably increased.

From the *Statesman's Year Book* of 1905 it appears that the approximate cost of the armed forces obtained by universal service is as follows :—¹

	ARMY.		NAVY.		TOTAL.
	£		£		£
France .	27,000,000 ...		12,500,000 ...		39,500,000
Germany	32,000,000 ...		11,000,000 ...		43,000,000
Japan .	4,000,000 ...		2,000,000 (?)		6,000,000 (?)

Compared with these figures, the cost of the British system is as follows :—

Great Britain 36,000,000 ... 35,000,000 ... 71,000,000

¹ Estimates for 1903-4 as regards France, Germany, and Great Britain ; 1904-5 as regards Japan. The cost of the Japanese navy is doubtful ; the *Daily Mail Year Book* estimates it as £5,000,000.

The average cost per soldier of Austria-Hungary, Germany, France, Russia, Italy, and Japan works out to about £5 8s.; while that of the British soldier—and this includes militia, volunteers, etc.—amounts to £33 3s.

It must be perfectly evident to every man that, if the British people choose to do so, Great Britain can accomplish that which other nations can accomplish; and, with the exercise of proper economy, organise herself as a nation in arms at a cost considerably lower than that which she at present prefers to pay. But it must be recognised that patriotism, or the spirit of self-sacrifice for the good of the community, is the very essence of a "nation in arms." Men who are prepared to give their lives for their country, if called on to do so, will not hesitate to serve the necessary period of training without pay, to forego luxury, and to face some little hardship in the execution of their duty. And, vice versa, men who are not prepared to serve their country without pay will not be likely to sacrifice their lives if called on to do so; and the principle of universal liability to service will by no means save such a nation from the doom which sooner or later overtakes all worthless and unpatriotic nations.

The latter book also compares Great Britain's expenditure with that of France and Germany in 1903 as follows:—Great Britain—army, £36,339,000; navy, £34,981,000; total, £71,320,000. France, army, £32,189,000; navy, £12,539,000; total, £44,728,000. Germany—army, £31,880,000; navy, £10,252,000; total, £42,132,000.

If the able-bodied British youth declines to serve at a smaller wage than one, or five, shillings a day, and if there is no means by which he can be compelled to do so, universal service will clearly be far more costly and, it is probable, but little more efficient than the present voluntary system. But, on the other hand, if he elects to serve from a sense of duty, the retrenchment in national expenditure is not so much to be calculated by the mere saving in the outlay on the national armaments, but by the fact that efficiency will be gained. The ultimate cost of inefficiency in the armaments of a country is beyond calculation ; for there is no calamity which can befall a nation so terrible as defeat in war. The payment of a possible war indemnity of some £500,000,000 or £750,000,000 is by no means to be disregarded in calculations on the cost of an inefficient military system. And then, moreover, it must be remembered that a training to arms not only gives a man the technical knowledge which is so necessary for the solution of problems in national strategy, but rouses in his heart a sense of devotion to his comrades and to the true interests of his country ; and that such a spirit infused into the political classes would go far to eradicate the growing evil of dissension or party intrigue, and in this matter alone might be calculated to save the nation an expenditure which can by no means be counted up in mere pounds, shillings, and pence. It must not be forgotten that the British people are still paying heavily for the

incapacity displayed by their leaders before, and during, the Boer War.

Compulsory universal service is the only means by which the problem of the dearth of officers—the gist of the problem of national defence—can be solved. The most capable men will quickly come forward to serve as officers rather than serve in the ranks.

It is the only means by which the necessary reserve for the navy can be obtained.

It is the only means by which the system of national leadership can be placed on a satisfactory footing.

It is the only means by which the great mass of the “unemployable,” the “loafers” and “hooligans” of every strata of society, can be dragged into a school of discipline and taught to work.

It is the only means by which the problem of the unemployed and those on the verge of starvation can be solved.

It is the only means by which discipline and patriotism can be taught to the nation as a whole, and by which the voters can be educated to subordinate their local interests to the national interest.

It is the only means by which class jealousy, which in time of disaster develops almost automatically into class warfare, can be rendered comparatively innocuous.

It is, probably, the only means by which the empire can be consolidated. The problem of imperial defence is merely an extension of that of national defence,

for the foundation of it is the destruction of the enemy. The British nation is, so to speak, the corner-stone of the imperial fabric ; if that corner-stone be displaced the whole fabric must collapse. There are, however, those who argue that the security of the nation depends ultimately on its wealth and commerce ; that therefore national defence cannot be considered apart from imperial defence ; and that the first attention should be given, not to the preparation for war of the British people, but to economic reform and to the consolidation of the empire. The argument may be to some extent true, except for the fact that force in war depends on the number and warlike efficiency of the men of a nation, and not so much on its wealth and resources. Prosperity follows victory. Commercial federation will by no means save the British nation from destruction if it lacks military efficiency. But, in any case, economic reform and the consolidation of the empire are evidently possible only when the national leadership has been reformed ; and the formation of the nation as a machine of war is the first step in that direction. There are, again, those who urge that the true destiny of the British people is to act as a "Regulating State," or a police force in the world of nations, on the grounds that it possesses no aggressive, but merely a defensive, power.¹ Putting aside the indisputable fact that a police force—which, supported by the

¹ See *The Empire and the Century: The Ideal before the British*, p. 27.

whole power of the law, seeks out and destroys criminals, whose sole hope of escape lies in avoiding observation—is essentially aggressive in its action, it is obvious that, if the people of the United Kingdom suffer defeat in war, the British Empire will not live to fulfil its proud destiny. If the British people hope to hold so pleasant and profitable a position as that of a police force in the world, the immediate introduction of compulsory universal service is essential.

It will also be argued that voluntary universal service is preferable to compulsion, for the reason that it is more in consonance with the traditions of the Anglo-Saxon races. Undoubtedly voluntary universal service is preferable in the abstract, but voluntary effort of such a nature can only arise through perfect unanimity of purpose and patriotism in a nation. Do these exist in the British nation? If not, how long will the education of the people require? Is there time for it? Is it possible without national schools of instruction composed of the armed forces, or without bitter experience of defeat in war to act as a school-master?

A crisis may occur now at any time within the next few years, and there is clearly no time to spare in effecting national regeneration. There seems to be no reason to believe that the introduction of voluntary universal service can be effected in the time available. Even if it were possible to do so, valuable time, which

might be devoted to the attainment of efficiency, would be lost.

Compulsory universal service would appear to be—on every consideration, economic, social, and military—necessary to the welfare and progress of a modern nation.

The practical man will deem it eminently desirable to seek earnestly for the means whereby compulsory universal service can be introduced into the state as soon as possible ; and, with this object in view, he will endeavour to ascertain what difficulties stand in the way of reform, and the method by which they can be surmounted.

But let us, in the first instance, consider the period of service which the men of the nation must be prepared to undergo if they would secure military efficiency.

Efficiency is a relative term ; if a proximate adversary trains his men for a period of three years, it is evidently unwise to be content with a period of one year only.

But the period of training by which efficiency may be obtained depends greatly on the nature of the man to be instructed. The intelligent man who has been taught at school the elements of patriotism, discipline, and drill, may be converted into an efficient fighting man in less time than the one who attains the age of manhood ignorant of these elements of the military art. Or, again, a youth may have received a modified soldier's training in nature's school, and may

require merely the finishing touch of discipline to render him perfect as a fighting man. It is, however, just this very quality, the result of ingrained habit, which demands a prolonged and continuous course of training.

There are those who maintain that the Briton is of finer fighting material than men of other nationalities. Whether or no this was the case in the past is doubtful, but in modern days the belief is probably due to that national vanity which most nations display in a marked degree. The conditions of existence of the greater number of the inhabitants of the British Islands, who are crowded together in large towns and cities, form, it will be admitted, the worst possible training for a fighting man, while their education, in comparison with that which the youth of nations in arms have for long enjoyed, is sadly neglected. It is to be feared that the natural aptitude, or hereditary instinct, for war of the Briton will prove to be less than that of Germans, the bulk of whose men have now been trained for a century past. It has been said, however, that the character of British youths is of fine quality. If an arduous education in games goes to form character, this opinion is probably true ; but if character is principally the result of mental training and education, it is probably untrue. It is assuredly the case that the period of training which the able-bodied youth of this country must undergo, if they would render themselves fit to guard the honour and security of the Fatherland, must not be

less than that which the youth of foreign nations undergo with the selfsame object in view.

We find that, in addition to the early school teaching, the three most efficient nations in arms train their men as follows :—¹

The Japanese train their soldiers and sailors for three and four years respectively.

The Germans train their infantry in two years, their cavalry and artillery in three years, and their sailors in three years.

The French train their soldiers and sailors in two and three years respectively.

It would seem desirable that the British youth—until a system of early training in the schools has been perfected, and until the nation has been formed into a machine of war—should be trained, the soldiers for not less than three years, and the sailors for not less than four.²

It will doubtless be argued that the Japanese, with a shorter period of training than the Russians, yet proved more efficient. That is true ; but then, on the other hand, the Japanese training far

¹ See the statement of periods of service, etc., at the end of the book.

² It is perhaps unnecessary to add that any attempt to introduce a system of universal service into the navy should be introduced tentatively and with extreme caution ; for the nation cannot afford to risk the slightest loss of efficiency, even for a temporary period, in that arm. But there is no reason why, if the operation were directed by a competent general staff, there should be the slightest loss of efficiency, even temporary.

exceeded that of the Russians both in realism and energy.

The efficiency of an armed force, however, must always depend, primarily, on the scientific military knowledge and powers of leadership of the officers. This fact is clearly recognised by all nations in arms, and it is for this very reason that they adopt the principle of professional officers. That a corps of professional officers, who devote their lives to the study of their science, is the backbone of an army will be denied by no one who has studied the science of war. That there are many civilians throughout Great Britain who are of opinion that they could lead troops in war is undoubtedly the case ; but it is also undoubtedly the case that few of them will ever find the troops to follow them or obey their orders after the first conflict. It is to be feared, however, that this fallacy, like so many others which the British people have taken to heart, will only be smashed to pieces by the rude shock of the first hard-fought battle. In spite of the assurances of civilians, it is a military platitude, the result of centuries of experience, that too much care and thought cannot be given to the training and education of officers. But then again, it will at once be pointed out that the Swiss have adopted the principle of unprofessional officers, and that it is just this corps of professional officers which induces the fear of "militarism." But, as we have already mentioned, the existence of the Swiss nation depends largely on the jealousies of the

neighbours ; and there is no real reason to suppose that the British people enjoy this safeguard to the same extent as the Swiss. As for "militarism," every nation must endeavour to steer a course between the *Scylla* of professional officers together with the risk of militarism, and the *Charybdis* of inefficiency and defeat in war. Those nations with a lively recollection of defeat and invasion prefer the risk of militarism. But such a risk only really exists when the officers are selected from the leisured classes, and not according to merit.

There seems no reason to doubt that the best course of training for the young officer is that he should, in the first instance, receive a thorough grounding in the broader aspects of the military science—the nature of war, the science of strategy and tactics, that is, the preparation and application of force—being taught discipline at the same time, and that he should thereafter pass to a technical school of the arm to which he is appointed. A "common entry" would, indeed, seem to be as necessary for the soldier as the sailor.

If a corps of officers of sufficient numerical strength could be thoroughly trained, it is probable that the length of service in the ranks for the private soldier could be materially lessened.

But these are mere platitudes which have long been known to every educated soldier. Let us turn to the consideration of by far the most difficult and important part of the problem of national defence. How

is reform, which practically amounts to national regeneration, to be effected in a nation of civilians in the time available? Compulsory universal service must come in the end, as we all know; but in this matter, as in all relating to war, it is time which is the essential factor.

CHAPTER XII

NATIONAL REGENERATION

The law of the land as to the liability to service—General levy—General and local militia—Number of able-bodied British youths available annually—Period in which the requisite numbers of trained men can be obtained—Period in which national efficiency can be obtained—Date by which universal service must be introduced if readiness for probable eventualities is desired—Difficulties in the way of reform—Party government—Regeneration seldom possible except with the employment of force by the party in favour of reform—The advocates and opponents of reform—Those on whom the burden will fall for the present state of inefficiency; those who gain by it—The parties between whom the issue lies—Fighting men and politicians—Is action by fighting men morally justified?—Views of Ruskin and Colonel Henderson—Action possible to the fighting men of the nation—The most effective action.

WE read that, "before the Norman Conquest, all freemen between the ages of fifteen and sixty who were capable of bearing arms were bound to go forth to the host (*fyrd*), or general levy, at the king's summons."¹ But "the force was liable to serve only in the kingdom, and, except in case of invasion, only in its own county."²

This liability of every man between the ages of fifteen and sixty still holds good, for we read: "Although the feudal levy was abolished in 1660, the liability to serve in the general levy has never been

¹ *Manual of Military Law*, p. 188.

² *Ibid.*, p. 189.

extinguished, and remains not only in constitutional theory, but also in the statutory and practical form of liability to serve both in the general and local militia."¹

It would thus seem that, though the custom has fallen into disuse, the King is constitutionally empowered to this day to call on all men between the ages of fifteen and sixty to serve the country without pay, not only in the event of invasion, but for such period of training as he may consider desirable. The obsolete system of the nations of warriors of antiquity still, in fact, holds good in England, though it has fallen into disuse in favour of a worse, a mercenary, system.

The liability to serve in the general levy was enforced up to the year 1624, and the trained bands were mustered annually. In the course of time—in 1662—these trained bands were converted into the militia. This militia was called out "in 1690 on the occasion of the French invasion, and again during the rebellions of 1715 and 1745."² In 1757 the militia was reorganised, and was apparently recruited by ballot, and this system was maintained up to the peace of 1815. After 1815 "the militia was allowed practically to fall into abeyance, though the permanent staff were maintained."³ "Then, from 1829 to 1865, an Act was passed annually suspending all proceedings for raising the militia by ballot, unless ordered by

¹ *Manual of Military Law*, p. 209.

² *Ibid.*, p. 210.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 211.

Order in Council, and the Act of that year has since been annually continued by the Expiring Laws Continuance Act.”¹

“In 1852, however, the system was changed, and the militia became a force of voluntarily enlisted men, with the ballot in reserve, as the Act of that year empowered the Crown in England to resort to the ballot, in case the quota in any county was not raised by voluntary enlistment, and also in case of invasion or imminent danger. In 1854 Acts were passed which provided for the raising of militiamen both in Scotland and Ireland by voluntary enlistment.”² The number of men which can be obtained by ballot is fixed by the Privy Council.

Thus, though the militia is now a voluntarily enlisted force, and though certain modifications have been introduced into the ballot system, the liability of Englishmen between the ages of eighteen and thirty for service in the militia, without pay, in defence of the country, though not for service across the seas, still remains.

The command of the militia is vested in the Crown, and is exercisable through a Secretary of State. The Crown can embody the militia in case of invasion or danger thereof. Militiamen are also liable to be called out for annual training; and the period, which is determined by the Crown, is fixed at not less than twenty-one and not more than fifty-six days. But a militia-

¹ *Manual of Military Law*, p. 211

² *Ibid.*, p. 214.

man is also liable to a preliminary training, which may be continued for a period of six months. Militiamen, taken by ballot, are liable to serve—the general militia for five years, the local militia for four years.

It will thus be seen that the ballot—the most unjust of all forms of conscription next to the press-gang—is still the law of the land! Volunteers and yeomen are apparently exempt from service in the militia, but not from service in the general levy.

It would thus seem that if the King exercised his power to call out a general levy, he could constitutionally compel all men between the ages of fifteen and sixty to serve, apparently without pay, for an indefinite period; but that, without the consent of Parliament, he could not obtain the money for the maintenance of this force.

If the ballot were brought into force, and if the quota required from the various counties were raised sufficiently high, all men between the ages of eighteen and thirty, except volunteers and yeomen, could be compelled to serve in the militia, apparently without pay, for one preliminary training of six months, and four or five annual trainings of fifty-six days each. But only in case of the imminent danger of invasion could the men of the country be called on to serve continuously. But before the ballot could be enforced, the concurrence of the Crown, the Privy Council, and Parliament would have to be obtained.

It will thus be seen that either the general levy or the militia ballot would bring the able-bodied men,

exclusive of the volunteers and the yeomen, to the standard.

It seems probable that it would be within the constitutional power of the above-mentioned authorities to order a general annual levy of all men attaining a certain specified age—the able-bodied age—and to retain their services for a period of six years: three years in the active militia, three years in the active reserve militia. These men could also, it would seem, be detailed for service either on land or sea. Volunteers and yeomen would not, it appears, be exempt from such a levy.

The number of British youths annually attaining the age of twenty years has been estimated at 350,000. In Germany the number is about 500,000, of whom about 150,000 are, from one cause or another, exempt from service.¹

Of the French youths about twenty-eight per cent are unfit. We may therefore assume that, of the available British youths, about 250,000 will be annually

¹ The *Handbook of the German Army* gives the numbers as follows:—

Unworthy (criminals, etc.) . . .	1,210
Unfit . . .	40,431
Landsturm, first levy (less fit) . . .	108,167
Ersatz reserve (probably fit later on) . . .	84,487
Conscripted for army . . .	219,128
" navy . . .	5,710
Volunteers for service . . .	44,282
Total . . .	503,415
Total joined army . . .	263,410

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fit for service.¹ Assuming that a general staff calculates that 25,000 men will be required annually for the navy, and that four years is the minimum period of service in which efficiency can be assured, and that three years is the minimum period for the army, we can calculate roughly the necessary period of service in the active reserves, and the number of years in which the nation can obtain active forces of sufficient numerical strength. We should get trained men (not allowing for wastage) as follows :—

	Active Navy.	Active Naval Reserve.	Sedentary Naval Reserve.	Active Army.	Active Army Reserve.	Sedentary Army Reserve.
In 1 year.	25,000	nil	nil	225,000	nil	nil
2 years.	50,000	...	...	550,000	...	...
3 "	75,000	...	...	775,000	...	...
4 "	100,000	...	...	775,000	225,000	...
5 "	100,000	25,000	...	775,000	550,000	...
6 "	100,000	50,000	...	775,000	775,000	...
7 "	100,000	75,000	...	775,000	1,000,000	...
8 "	100,000	100,000	...	775,000	1,225,000	...
9 "	100,000	100,000	25,000	775,000	1,225,000	225,000
10 "	100,000	100,000	50,000	775,000	1,225,000	550,000
11 "	100,000	100,000	75,000	775,000	1,225,000	750,000
12 "	100,000	100,000	100,000	775,000	1,225,000	1,000,000

It will thus be seen that, with four years' service in the active navy and four years in the active naval reserve, we should, after eight years, obtain 200,000

¹ It seems possible, indeed, that a larger number might be obtained, and it is, undeniably, of the first importance that every available man should be trained to bear arms, or, at least, to discipline and to some little knowledge of what war means. It is the custom with many nations to exempt clergymen, only sons of widows, doctors, schoolmasters, and politicians, as well as criminals, and the mentally and physically unsound. The mentally unfit and criminals (who might be

trained seamen always available. With three years' service in the active army and five years in the active reserve, we should, in eight years, have about 2,000,000 trained men available for the land forces. In eight years the nation would possess armed forces of, probably, sufficient numerical strength. In twelve years it would possess 3,300,000 trained and organised men ; and its security in all eventualities would be practically assured, provided the training were thorough, and provided all classes of society had used their utmost efforts to ensure efficiency.

After a period of twelve years of universal service, it seems probable that, with so large a number of trained men—some three million—public opinion would be educated in the requirements of war, that the truth of the military maxim, "the offensive is the only safe defence," would be recognised, and that the importance of India and Egypt to the welfare of the British com-

otherwise dealt with) would seem to be properly exempted ; but as regards the other classes there is room for doubt. An only son might be taken if his mother were provided for at the public expense. The politician and schoolmaster would clearly benefit considerably, and be of more value to their country, if they had received a military education ; while, as regards the clergyman, there seems no good reason to believe that a training in patriotism, or the spirit of self-sacrifice for the good of the community, could, even though war be wicked in the abstract, reduce a man's chances of admission to a state of happiness hereafter, or render him less efficient as a guide to others. The services of every available doctor would probably be required in a hard-fought struggle ; and for that reason this class should be given a military training. It is, moreover, but little short of an insult to these classes to suggest that they should be placed in the same category as criminals.

munity would be generally understood. It would thus probably come about that the people themselves would demand liability on the part of all to oversea service, that a longer period of service in the active reserves should be adopted with a view to the increase of available numbers, and that the sedentary forces should be properly organised. It is, indeed, possible that this education of public opinion might be effected in a shorter space of time ; but it must be pointed out that until it is effected the nation cannot be constituted as an efficient machine of war, and is therefore not in a fit condition to venture upon war with a nation in arms, and is, for that reason, in reality, defenceless. Thus we may say that, if the nation wishes to be in comparative readiness by 1920, compulsory universal service should be introduced not later than 1908.

But, it will be asked, how are the authorities to be induced to introduce compulsory service ? The movement must be initiated by His Majesty the King or the Government, who must gain the consent of the Privy Council and of the Houses of Parliament. As the last named control the national expenditure, it is obvious that they are masters of the situation.

The Houses of Parliament are, however, as we have seen, divided into two or more hostile factions, each one actuated apparently by the chief desire to gain, or retain, office. Each one, in consequence, seeks primarily to win popularity, and will by no

means so much as suggest any measure which is calculated to rouse the antagonism of the populace. The idea of any form of universal service is, in the present uneducated state of public opinion, believed, or at least said, to be unpopular.

The history of party government seems to show that the attempt to introduce any unpopular measure, or indeed any measure of first-class importance, results inevitably in the loss of power by the government that ventures it. If a government desires to retain power, and at the same time to introduce reform, it must first endeavour to educate the people to the necessity for the proposed reform. The education of the people, in face of the opposition of the political opponents of the government, requires many years. The introduction of free trade was only successfully accomplished after some seven years of political effort ; while home rule for Ireland, as well as fiscal reform, have both, up to the present, failed. So well are these facts known that a party government nowadays does not seek to "lead," it awaits a "mandate" from the people. It introduces a vast number of measures, few of which can by any possibility be carried through, the object being, apparently, not so much to effect reform or progress, as to retain the assistance of the various cliques amongst its supporters, the defection of any one of which might cause its fall from power. These measures, however, it is usually prepared to relinquish on the first sign of determined opposition, especially if it can point out

that the Bill has failed through the ignorance, the incapacity, or the machinations of the opposition. It would appear to carefully avoid any real effort which might jeopardise the position of the government. It will be remembered that Mr. Chamberlain found it necessary to resign his membership of the government before he attempted to introduce his measure in favour of fiscal reform and the consolidation of the empire. We may perhaps venture to affirm that the modern party government has ceased even to attempt to educate the people ; it is too dangerous ; it leaves such education to the initiative of individuals.¹

¹ There is, indeed, some little reason to apprehend that they object to the education of the people, when, at least, such education is calculated to prejudice their own interests. As a well-known case in point, we may mention that the late Colonel Henderson was employed for about two years prior to his death in writing the official history of the Boer War. Colonel Henderson was, perhaps, the deepest student of war in the British army ; he had dedicated his life to his profession ; he was the man of all others in whose judgment and capacity all who had read his works, or who had come under his influence, had the fullest confidence. Since his untimely death, all soldiers—all educated soldiers, at least—have looked forward with some impatience to the publication of his work. They have all felt that the urgent necessity existed that the faults in the conduct of the war should be probed and laid bare by an expert hand, in order that these failings should be avoided in the future. They knew, however, that the publication of his work would be strongly opposed by every man whose party or personal interest would urge the suppression of the truth, or whose vanity could ill brook criticism by a mere soldier. His work has not yet been published ; and it is now said that it has been deliberately destroyed. It will, doubtless, be stated, if the matter

The opposition, on the other hand, seeks to fix responsibility for some intended action on to the elusive government. Thus, it may be remembered, the present government, when in opposition, taxed the late government with the intention to introduce fiscal reform—an imputation which was stoutly denied. Sometimes a government will claim to have received a mandate from the people, a claim which is stoutly denied by the opposition.

The people of a nation, concerned with their own business, seldom, if ever, give a mandate to their leaders on any point whatsoever, except possibly the reduction of taxation. Or, in time of national disaster, when in extremity, a nation will often give a mandate to fight to the last ; or sometimes, when exhausted, it will give a mandate to make peace at any price. Such a mandate, however, usually takes the form of revolution.

is ever brought forward, that the publication of this work was opposed to the public interest ; but of that—of the true appreciation of the national as opposed to party or personal interest—Colonel Henderson and the British public were surely better judges than those whose reputations were at stake. And, in the meantime, the valuable lessons of the war have been lost, and the education of the national leaders, the people, and the army has been set aside. If it is true that this work has been destroyed, then it would seem to have been an unscrupulous, ill-judged, and unpatriotic action, one that is cruelly unjust to the man who up to the very last had slaved and toiled, and who had, in the best sense of the expression, given his life for his country. It was an action which was well worthy of the best days of an irresponsible despotism ; but hardly one to be expected from the government of a free and enlightened people.

In the absence of schools, consisting of the armed forces, in which self-sacrifice for the good of the community is taught, each local community considers, as is but natural, its own interests alone. In this fact there is some hope. For the new national army is to be placed under the control of county associations. If the Eastern Counties Association considers its own vital interests, it will introduce universal service forthwith, and, thereafter, compel the remainder of the country to conform.

Under the constitution of the land the Crown is not permitted, apparently, to initiate reform, or to educate the people on any question.

If a council of defence, or an imperial council, could be constituted with power of control over the political party in power, or if a general staff, holding such power, and including in its ranks the great non-political statesmen of the day, could be organised, then reform could be accomplished with ease and expedition. But the formation of any such body is itself a reform of far-reaching importance, which would reduce at once the power of political parties. Who is to initiate such a reform? Political parties, we may be certain, will refuse point-blank to do so ; the Crown cannot, apparently, do so ; the people will not see the necessity for reform until after defeat in war.

It is thus no exaggeration to assert that reform is, if not impossible, a matter of extraordinary difficulty to the British people. It is to be feared, moreover, that the difficulty increases year by year.

If we turn to the methods by which the difficulties in the way of reform can be surmounted, we at once ask ourselves the question, is there any outside influence, other than that of defeat in war and revolution, which we particularly seek to avoid, which can break through the above circle of irresponsibility ?

Throughout history we see that all reform movements are fought out between two cliques ; and that one wins, either because it can rouse and sway the vast inert mass of the people, or because it can reduce or convert its opponents by force of arms or arguments. Very seldom, if ever, has a reform which amounts to the regeneration of a nation been successfully accomplished by argument, unless that argument takes the form of a threat of the employment of physical force directed against the party of reaction. Cromwell seeking earnestly to "settle the nation" was, in the end, obliged to employ force. The regeneration of Italy could not be effected except by the employment of force. The Prussians could only establish their present system after the suppression of a revolution. The Austrians required the defeat of 1866, while the French required the horrors of 1870-1, before regeneration could be effected. The Japanese reformers were obliged to resort to force. The Boxer rebellion in China was in reality, it appears, the attempt of the party of reaction to maintain its supremacy.

It thus becomes necessary, in all great questions of reform, to discover which parties of the state are in favour of, and which are opposed to, reform. Bearing

in mind that, if history speaks true, self-interest is invariably the mainspring of the actions of communities, if not always of individual men, we will seek to elucidate this problem by endeavouring to ascertain who are the greatest gainers by the present state of inefficiency, and, therefore, on whom the responsibility for it must fall. If there is such a party, it will probably be found to be the party of reaction, the party opposed to national regeneration. If we then can ascertain on which party of the state the chief burden of defeat will fall, we have that party which is, probably, the principal advocate of reform. The issue would then appear to lie between these two, and we can then study the methods by which the party in favour of reform can impress its views on its opponents. It is, it will not be denied, a most difficult question, but, nevertheless, one which we must attempt to answer if we would arrive at a solution of the problem of national defence.

Success in modern war, which depends, as in the past, on the victory of the armed forces, is in reality won in the field of scientific preparation. This fact is very well known to educated soldiers—a mere military platitude, indeed—who would long since have introduced universal service had it been in their power to do so. It will doubtless be argued that soldiers should proclaim the state of military and national inefficiency from the housetop ; that, indeed, it is their bounden duty to do so. But soldiers and sailors are, after all, mere men ; they, like other men, can hardly be ex-

pected to ruin their careers, to "quarrel with their bread and butter." The soldier who ventures to seek out the true cause of, and to expose, the inefficiency of the army and the nation, of necessity blunders against the powers that be, and is apt to find that he is a ruined man. This fact is very well known to soldiers; one constantly hears, when discussing the question of efficiency, "I wish I could afford to speak my mind," or, "I wish I could afford to leave." These are men who have faced death, and who are prepared to sacrifice their lives on the battlefield; they are no cowards; but it is one thing to give one's life in the service of his country, it is another to bring down misery on the heads of nearest and dearest, and to live to face the finger of scorn—for what reckes the indiscriminating public *why* a man has failed—the dog is down, kick him!

Let us note exactly the disabilities under which soldiers labour in seeking to give expression to their opinions.

1. If soldiers band together with any purpose in view—even though that purpose be the attainment of efficiency—they commit, apparently, the crime of mutiny.

2. The soldier is not granted freedom of speech; that is, he may neither write to the public press nor address meetings. He thus finds it somewhat difficult, if not impracticable, to instruct the public without serious danger to his own career.

3. The soldier is only permitted to vote in circum-

stances which seldom, if ever, arise. He has, therefore, no power to control, in the slightest degree, the political situation. And yet it can hardly be denied that the man who is prepared to shed his blood for his country, who perhaps has already done so, whose relatives have perhaps died for it, has a greater stake in it than the mere householder or wealthy man.

4. If an officer commits any offence, he has no right to trial by his peers, even though he may have been actuated by the highest of motives. He is, in reality, tried by a secret conclave—he himself being absent—and is given no opportunity either to cross-examine the witnesses on oath or to defend himself. If his offence be serious, and yet one which it is inadvisable to proclaim abroad, he is merely struck off the list for accelerated promotion, that is, his career is marred. It is true that there exists a channel through which he may press for redress of grievances; but his grievance, though very real, is yet intangible; and, moreover, as this channel leads through those who have already tried and convicted him, it is not of much value. So well are these facts appreciated, that no soldier has ever been known to make use of this official channel—or is the alternative of this true, that the administration of the army has always been so perfect that no soldier has ever possessed a grievance? It will not for a moment be denied that "selection" is essential to the efficiency of an army; and neither will any educated and patriotic soldier grumble at being passed over by a better man than himself. But that is another matter.

5. If from any cause an officer's prospects in the army have been ruined, he is reduced to adopt one of the following alternatives : to retire from the service and seek employment, possibly at an advanced age, in the already congested labour market ; or to "hang on"—a very well-known expression in the army—until he can retire on a pension, which is hardly adequate to furnish the bare necessities of his station in life.

It will be seen that, in this free country, the British officer is very much of a slave, almost as much so, perhaps, as the Chinese labourer in South Africa. There is one law for the civilian and another for the fighting man ; freedom in the former becomes insubordination in the latter. And yet he is told that he is a citizen first, and a soldier afterwards ! Soldiers who venture openly to urge reform do so at their own risk. It is a serious political offence, inasmuch as the first step on the road to reform is to remove the armed forces from under the control of the political authorities. High rank, proved capacity, and meritorious service will not save the offender—a fact which was exemplified when the War Office was last reorganised. The civilian—even the highly placed one—may act the part of a traitor to his country, even in time of war, with impunity ; the soldier may not even attempt to introduce efficiency into the army or the nation either in war or peace.

It is, however, the *métier* of a soldier to accept risk boldly, and to face ruin as well as death in the service of his country. This is a fact none will deny, though

it is one of those platitudes which nobody believes nowadays.

It is, surely, the case that the duty of the fighting man is not limited to the display of heroism in time of war. Has he not a double duty, which we may perhaps term—it is the fashion nowadays—imperial and parochial? Is it not an imperial duty that he should lose no opportunity in peace time to impress on his countrymen the inevitable result of the present disregard of the most vital of all national problems? The fighting man would surely do wisely to remember that he alone in a vast community of civilians possesses any knowledge of the significance of the word “war” or the means by which alone victory can be won. Posterity, it is to be feared, will hardly hold blameless those educated soldiers and sailors who, whatsoever their motives, have failed to make the attempt, however hopeless it may appear to be, to open the eyes of their ignorant compatriots. And it does appear to be almost hopeless; for the soldier who ventures to appeal for reform is instantly regarded as a disappointed man, and therefore one to be discredited. And so, in a sense, he is a disappointed man—disappointed to find that the army, to which he has devoted his whole energies and the best years of his life, is not intended for real use, but is the toy of the politician, generally regarded on all sides with amusement tinged with contempt. Yes, the educated and patriotic British soldier must, of necessity, be a disappointed man.

It is constantly asserted that some responsibility rests with the soldier, inasmuch as he does not know his own mind. The Military Correspondent of *The Times*, writing on the General Staff in May, 1905, states that "no such thing as military opinion upon great questions of policy and organisation can be said to exist." He points out that, in the absence of a general staff, a statesman "discovers neither unanimity among his military advisers nor even a well-reasoned basis for military views placed before him. He declares, and he is justified in declaring, that soldiers always differ upon military questions and generally make their differences known."¹ The present Secretary of State for War has also said—as reported in the press—"At the War Office they had no deficiency of advisers, but it was impossible to follow the advice of all of them."

Is this fact altogether explained by the absence of a general staff? Has the British soldier ever been asked a fair question? Has he not always been asked to give his opinion as to the best method by which military efficiency can be attained without alteration of the existing voluntary system? The answer to this question can be given in three words: "It is impossible." But no! That answer does not satisfy. Soldiers then loyally seek to find some compromise by means of which they shall carry out their orders and attempt the impossible. There are always a

¹ *Imperial Strategy*: "The General Staff." By the Military Correspondent of *The Times*.

thousand methods by which one may seek to achieve the impossible ; and is it any wonder that the opinions of soldiers have been divided ?

If soldiers are asked the question : Is compulsory universal service necessary for the welfare and security of the country and the empire ?—it may be safely asserted that ninety per cent of the educated soldiers of the army will give an answer in the affirmative. If that principle were finally established as the expert opinion of the army, surely something would be gained. The responsible statesman could then take his courage in both hands and go boldly to the country—yes, and face his colleagues boldly too, if necessary.

Sailors, on the other hand, appear to be adverse to the idea of universal service. They fear, apparently, that powerful land forces will withdraw public interest from the navy, leading to the reduction and inefficiency of the sea forces. There is much to be said for their point of view ; for the British nation, like every vast and complex community, can seldom think of more than one thing at a time. All the more reason, therefore, why the armed forces of the nation should be one thing, a thing part and parcel of the nation, organised and directed on scientific principles.

There is really not the smallest reason to fear that the navy will suffer if the nation be educated to military requirements. Quite the reverse, indeed. Every educated soldier recognises that the army is supplementary to the navy, exists to confirm its work

and is helpless without it. No educated British soldier would willingly see the power of the British navy reduced. If sailors, for instance, maintained that long service was essential to naval efficiency, all soldiers would instantly give way, though they might, perhaps, urge the necessity for the formation of an adequate naval reserve and the worthlessness of mercenaries.

There is, however, real danger that the navy may, at any time under the existing system, be ruined merely to satisfy some temporary demand of the party-political situation. Sailors would do wisely to recognise this truth.

There are those who maintain that the working man is responsible for the failure—it cannot be called refusal, for the nation has never yet been asked the question—to introduce universal service. There is an idea abroad in the country that the working man is unpatriotic. It is, however, a noticeable feature in history that the working man has seldom, if ever, been unpatriotic ; his patriotism, on the contrary, has always been of an extremely robust nature. It is he who has always fought to the last. No nation has ever been ruined through the failings of its working men. Decadence, as is obvious from history, commences from above ; it has always been the wealthy and leisured classes, those brought up in luxury and idleness, who will move neither hand nor foot for the good of their country ; and who, in the last resort, seek to escape from the country with their

wealth. The working man is, through the very conditions of his existence, inured to warfare; he quickly learns the lesson that combination is necessary either to gain increased comfort or to resist aggression, and that training and organisation in peace are essential to effective combination in war. Human nature is human nature all the world over. Is it not very remarkable that the British working man should be so startling a contrast to his prototype of the past? Is it true? Lecturers for the National Service League appear to meet with considerable encouragement from the working man.

There seems but little reason to believe that the British working man would refuse to accept universal service if the alternatives were clearly placed before him; and, in any case, he should surely, in ordinary justice, be given the benefit of the doubt until the question has been put to him.

It seems quite childish to suppose that business men would, if they knew the real dangers of the situation, refuse to take out the necessary policy of insurance to cover risks, or would refuse, if no other means were available, to fight in defence of their own possessions. If they once recognised that they must fight, they would be quick to train themselves. They are no simpletons, these business men! Unfortunately, they appear to distrust those who advise the introduction of military efficiency, in the apparent belief that their objects are not above suspicion. They do not appear to consider that those who deny the necessity

for military reform may also have their own objects to gain. Self-interest is certainly the mainspring of human action ; and this fact the struggling—not the prosperous—business man will be the first to recognise and admit to himself. He might remember, however, that disinterested men, those who will do what they conceive to be their duty for its own sake, are more often to be found in the ranks of the fighting forces than in those of any other class of society ; for the spirit of self-sacrifice to duty is the essence of military education. The business man would, however, do well to study this problem of national defence, and to use his own wits in the matter.

It is but natural that the “hooligan” and “waster” should neither work nor fight ; their object is to prey upon, and live at the expense of, the community. They form, apparently, a powerful class of the British nation, and their power appears to increase daily.

Each organ of the press reflects, and influences, the views of a certain section of the people. That the press, as a whole, could sway public opinion there is not the smallest reason to doubt ; but that it will ever do so of its own initiative, which would presuppose unanimity of purpose throughout the press, is impossible, unless that unanimity of purpose primarily existed throughout the nation.

Perfect agreement throughout the press can only, it is probable, be roused by some grave national danger which would be apparent to all, or by a great oratorical genius.

We have had the latter, and to spare, in Great Britain for some centuries past, but yet the press has never been in complete accord. That an oratorical genius of sufficient eminence will ever arise seems unlikely. It is, in any case, fairly evident that the responsibility for national inefficiency cannot attach to the press.

It will probably be admitted by all that the responsibility for national disaster if, or rather when, it occurs, will rest, not with sailors or soldiers, nor with the mass of the people, nor with the business communities, nor with the press, but with the Houses of Parliament.

With one or two exceptions, there is hardly a British statesman or politician who has advocated universal service, or even any form of universal training to arms. Is it not the case of late years that every reference in the Houses of Parliament to this subject, which is, notoriously, of paramount importance to the British people, has been lightly brushed aside, treated with contemptuous indifference, or cast out of court by some deliberately misleading statement? Every attempt to introduce discussion on the subject is met by the cry of "militarism." Military efficiency and "militarism" are as far apart as the poles; and yet we see the two purposely, and—it is evident—maliciously, confounded. And it has even been cynically stated in Parliament that the new national army is to be raised as a barrier in view of a possible attempt to introduce compulsory universal service.

Why is all this? Is it because politicians *believe* in the present so-called "voluntary system"? Or is it that their own interests are at stake? Are their interests, like those of the demagogues of the past, bound up with a state of military and national inefficiency? They term every man—even Lord Roberts—an alarmist who ventures to express fears for the safety of the country. They cannot understand—and they can hardly be expected to, perhaps—that their own proved incapacity and self-seeking is the surest justification for such alarm. It is now five years since the termination of the Boer War, when the urgent need for military and national reform became apparent to all men; and yet practically nothing has been accomplished. On the 24th November, 1906, at Bath, the present Secretary of State for War urged the necessity for further deliberation, and hoped that within the next twelve months something might be accomplished. He once more pointed out that the nation disliked being "dragooned," and that the government was "dead against conscription." He has now brought in his scheme for a "nation in arms" built up on voluntary service!

History shows that every nation, democratic or otherwise, has its ruling class. It shows also that this aristocracy, whether it be one of birth, of wealth, of talent, or, as in the case of modern Britain and ancient Athens, of oratory, holds great power and privileges, is strictly conservative, and is opposed to all real reform which is calculated to lower its

authority and prestige, and, consequently, to reduce its prerogatives.

Let us see if there is any reason to believe that the British politician as a class is averse to compulsory universal service lest it should prejudice his own interests.

It is absurd to suppose that a nation of trained, disciplined, educated, and organised soldiers and sailors—fighting men—will for long brook the leadership of untrained, and from the point of view of war uneducated, men. That this fact is recognised by politicians themselves seems clear. We constantly hear the assertion, "soldiers wish to introduce universal service in order that they may control the state." It is untrue. Soldiers have no wish to control the state, they have their own work to attend to; but they cannot do their duty if the national leadership is inefficient; and they wish, if possible, to avoid the likelihood that such a control may be forced upon them; and they do hope to see the day when statesmen will be men, trained to the consideration and solution of national problems, and conversant with the rudiments, at least, of the science of war. Is this so monstrous a desire on the part of men whose lives will be at stake? Every man—except the politician himself—will surely admit that the politician, if taught in his youth the spirit of self-sacrifice and to recognise vital issues, would be both a better man and a more efficient ruler. Training as a fighting man teaches the virtue of self-sacrifice

at least ; and this is, it will not be denied—for “example is better than precept”—the first of all essentials in a leader of men.

And there is also, apparently, that other reason—that a party government can only venture to introduce any measure of first-class importance provided it be prepared to abdicate power.¹ This, as we all know, it is never, under any circumstances, prepared to do. Party governments openly attempt to justify themselves by the argument that it would prove to be such a terrible calamity for the nation if, by chance, the opposition were to come into power. Any man, however, who has studied what party governments have done, and not what they have merely said, will probably consider that there is little to choose between them ; for they can seldom succeed in accomplishing anything of importance, whether for good or evil.

These reasons would appear to be quite sufficient to account for the attitude of successive governments, and the almost unanimous opposition displayed by politicians, towards military reform and efficiency.

But, after all, the responsibility for the present state of inefficiency can hardly be said to rest with the whole of the people's representatives in Parliament, for the vast bulk of them take their cue from a few well-known leaders. An article entitled “Fact

¹ There is some little reason to suppose that both political parties recognise the urgent necessity for compulsory universal service ; but that each one, believing the measure to be unpopular, seeks to oblige its opponents to introduce it.

v. Fiction in Representative Government," by a Member of Parliament, which appeared in the *National Review* (December, 1906), shows that the people's representatives are quite helpless in the hands of this "junta of nominated politicians." These leaders are the men who make a business of politics, who devote their lives to it. It is their profession, and surely we are justified in terming them professional politicians. It is these leaders who are divided into two distinct parties, who struggle with one another for supremacy. These leaders could, without doubt, if they chose to combine and exercise their power, sway the opinion of the Houses of Parliament, of the press, and of the public. They prefer, however, to direct their whole energies to the effort to obtain or retain power. The lives and biographies of eminent politicians make the most pitiful reading; references to the national interest seldom appear; it is the party interest which is always paramount. In Lord Rosebery's *Lord Randolph Churchill* we read: "'The party tie,' as one reminded him, 'is the strongest sentiment in this country—stronger than patriotism or even self-interest.'" But the politician appears to ignore the fact that this party interest is the same thing as self-interest.

These professional politicians are often selected, it appears, not for their knowledge or capacity, but solely with regard to their family connexions or social qualifications. Very often a professional politician who has proved his incapacity in one branch of

administration is promoted to another. Now and then a capable man from outside forces his way into this ring, where he is regarded with considerable suspicion as being over bold and energetic. Party government tends, it would seem, to degenerate into an oligarchy. And yet these are the men before whom not only the fighting men of the nation, but even the great non-political statesmen and administrators quail in terror. And it will be admitted that they have reason ; for it is not only the fighting man whose career and reputation are at the mercy of the professional politician. It will hardly have been forgotten that certain non-political statesmen who, as governors of outlying dependencies of the empire, have accomplished their duty like men in times of grave emergency, have, apparently without preliminary inquiry of any sort or description, been censured, grossly insulted, or calumniated by their political masters. The worst feature is that Parliament and the public acquiesce, very often without protest, in this despotic and, it is to be feared, somewhat dishonest, rule. But Parliament and the public appear to be helpless. It seems probable, if this system of leadership is permitted to continue, that the nation will obtain the services of none but hopeless mediocrities in the years to come.

The student of history and of human nature will at once ask himself, what interest have these men in holding power ? Do they reap any material advantages, either for themselves or their families, from the

position they hold ? It is clearly not so much a question of money, for these leaders are usually wealthy men. Is it merely the love of power and the plaudits of the people ? Or is it that they can find lucrative employment for their relatives and friends ? Or, again, is it that they are actuated by the noblest of motives, and that they honestly believe that their leadership, their so-called *government* by discussion, their petty party quarrelling, really conduce to the happiness, progress, and security of the nation ? They would do well to remember that, in time of disaster, ignorance which sacrifices the lives of men and the interests of the country is, in the eyes of fighting men at least, almost as great a crime as deliberate wrongdoing. It is beyond all doubt the case that this party bickering, this eternal contest for the emoluments of office, and the ignorance and self-seeking of these political leaders, has been the cause of such defeats as British sailors and soldiers have experienced in the last few centuries, of much of the British blood that has been shed, and of the habitual state of unreadiness for war in the nation as a whole.

It seems that we are, perhaps, justified in the conclusion that the chief responsibility for the present state of inefficiency lies with the professional politician, for the reason, either that he is too ignorant to grasp the necessity for reform, or that, aware of that necessity, he has nevertheless, for his own reasons, which are not entirely above suspicion, neglected to make the smallest attempt to introduce reform.

Our conclusion would seem to be upheld by Lord Wolseley's opinion, as the following quotation from the *National Service Journal* (January, 1907) will show: "One party is as bad as the other," writes Lord Wolseley, "and I hope and pray that when the national misfortune of a great defeat on sea overtakes us, followed by the invasion of England or Ireland, John Bull will turn and rend the talkers who prevent us from being prepared to meet invasion."

But let us now endeavour to ascertain on which party of the state the chief burden of defeat will fall, in order that we may discover the party whose interests lie in the direction of reform.

The burden of defeat will rest, in the first instance, obviously enough, on sailors and soldiers, whose lives will be sacrificed, and who will also—as has always happened in Great Britain—be made the scapegoats to bear all the blame. Not only will the fighting men be the first to suffer in their own persons, but their families, who will be left unguarded, will be the first to suffer in the event of either invasion or revolution.

The burden of defeat will also fall heavily on that portion of the population which exists on the verge of starvation. These will be precipitated over the verge.

It will also fall heavily on the great mass of the people, whose means of livelihood are small. These will be dragged to the verge of starvation. Those in business will probably be ruined.

The wealthy and leisured classes will only really suffer in the event of invasion or revolution. Many

of them will, doubtless, escape from the country with a portion, if not the whole, of their wealth.

The political classes are, for the greater part, drawn from the wealthy and leisured classes. While other men will, in the last resort, be called on to sacrifice their lives for their country, politicians will, doubtless, continue to make speeches.

It seems fairly evident that while the chief advocates of reform are, as is but natural, the patriots and fighting men of the country, the principal opponents are, as is also natural, those classes whose business is politics. The issue appears to lie between fighting man, the natural leader of the patriotic party, and professional politician. There can, of course, be no question, when these two parties come face to face, of the ultimate outcome. For the demagogue depends on intrigue, the fighting man on physical force. Intrigue has always, throughout history, in the end succumbed to physical force. The pen is mightier than the sword only when the latter is in the scabbard. As illustrations we may quote the numerous struggles for supremacy between demagogues and warriors in ancient times, as well as those between popes and kings in the Middle Ages.

A few pioneers of the reform movement must face the prospect of certain ruin, or, possibly—who knows?—worse; examples will, doubtless, be made of one or two of them. But all reformers, who perforce strike at the vested interests of the ruling class, must face this prospect. And it is, surely, both a

nobler ambition and a finer fate to face ruin, or worse, for one's country, than to become a general—of necessity, none too highly trained—of a hopelessly inefficient army.

It may be argued that the auxiliary forces, or the new national army, will constitute a powerful lever with which to keep the regular forces in check, and this hope it is which, doubtless, enhances the value of the auxiliary forces in the eyes of the politician. The argument is, however, a fallacy, for the whistle of the first bullet in close proximity to a man's head blows many a fusty cobweb from his brain; and even though the auxiliary forces are prepared to support the supremacy of the party opposed to reform in peace time, yet it is to be expected that, in time of disaster, fighting men of every denomination will, as they always have done in the past, sooner or later, sink their differences and join together to wreak vengeance on those whom they believe to be responsible for the misery of the country. That many innocent people will suffer as well as the guilty will certainly be the case; but if the educated fighting men can fix the responsibility in peace time, it is to be hoped that they will act with more self-restraint or, at least, with more discrimination when the time comes.

But, at present, the political clique in Great Britain holds the public by the ear and the fighting man under its thumb. All efforts made by fighting men and patriots to rouse the political classes to a sense of their responsibilities have in the past, it will be

generally admitted, failed hopelessly;¹ and there is no reason to suppose that mere representation of the necessity for reform will prove more effective in the future. The point to be considered is what action, if any, can now be taken by fighting men and the advocates of reform in the hope that drastic action may be avoided hereafter. But before we consider the measures that can be adopted, let us first be certain that the fighting man is justified in taking action of any kind. On this matter there are two distinct and diverse opinions.

Ruskin, lecturing to the cadets at Woolwich in the year 1865, spoke as follows :—

“ You may think that the whole duty of a soldier is to be passive, that it is the country you have left behind who is to command, and you have only to obey. But are you sure that you have left *all* your country behind, or that the part of it you have so left is indeed the best part of it ? Suppose—and, remember, it is quite conceivable—that you yourselves are indeed the best part of England ; that you, who have become the slaves, ought to have been the masters ; and that

¹ In 1887, for instance, General Brackenbury drew attention to the necessity for a “ great central thinking department,” while in 1889, Mr. Spenser Wilkinson published *The Brains of an Army*. Yet the Boer War of 1899–1902 was necessary before the necessity for reform could be impressed on politicians. And, again, the press has lately urged the government to legislate in order that the dissemination of information to the enemy may be checked in time of war. (See the *Morning Post*, April 6th, 1907.) No steps have yet been taken in the matter ; and there is no reason to suppose that any government will attempt to legislate unless it is terrified into doing so.

those who are the masters, ought to have been the slaves ! If it is a noble and whole-hearted England, whose bidding you are bound to do, it is well ; but if you are yourselves the best of her heart, and the England you have left be but a half-hearted England, how say you of your obedience ? You were too proud to become shopkeepers : are you satisfied, then, to become the servants of shopkeepers ? You were too proud to become merchants or farmers yourselves : will you have merchants or farmers, then, for your field-m Marshals ? You had no gifts of special grace for Exeter Hall : will you have some gifted person thereat for your commander-in-chief, to judge of your work, and reward it ? You imagine yourselves to be the army of England : how if you should find yourselves, at last, only the police of her manufacturing towns, and the beadles of her Little Bethels ? . . . What I want you to see, and to be assured of, is, that the ideal of soldiership is not mere passive obedience and bravery ; that, so far from this, no country is in a healthy state which has separated, even in a small degree, her civil from her military power. All states of the world, however great, fall at once when they use mercenary armies ; and although it is a less instant form of error (because involving no national taint of cowardice), it is yet an error, no less ultimately fatal—it is the error especially of modern times, of which we cannot yet know all the calamitous consequences,—to take away the best blood and strength of the nation, all the soul-substance of it that is brave, and careless of

reward, and scornful of pain, and faithful in trust and to cast that into steel, and make a mere sword of it; taking away its voice and will; but to keep the worst part of the nation—whatever is cowardly, avaricious, sensual, and faithless—and to give to this the voice, to this the authority, to this the chief privilege, where there is least capacity, thought.

“The fulfilment of your vow for the defence of England will by no means consist in carrying out such a system. You are not true soldiers, if you only mean to stand at a shop-door, to protect shop-boys who are cheating inside. A soldier’s vow to his country is that he will die for the guardianship of her domestic virtue, of her righteous laws, and of her any-way challenged or endangered honour. A soldier without virtue, without laws, and without honour, is bound *not* to defend; nay, bound to redress by his own right hand that which he sees to be base in her.”¹

Colonel Henderson, on the other hand, writing to Wellington, speaks as follows :—

“And, if I may be permitted to add my few words to this most eloquent tribute, he left to our army a special legacy. Throughout the whole of his career he had been the most obedient of subordinates. Loyalty to his superiors, whether statesmen or soldiers, was the first rule of his life. Whether he approved

¹ *The Crown of Wild Olive*—“War.”

their action or not, he invariably supported them, and he never permitted himself to criticise. The most bitter remark he ever made was after the battle of Vimiero, when the interference of a stupid superior, who had just come upon the field, held him back from a pursuit which must have proved decisive. 'Gentlemen,' he said, turning to his staff, 'there is nothing left to us but to hunt red partridges.' Further than such caustic speech he never went. That a soldier should criticise his superiors, either in public or in private, did not square with his ideal of an officer and a gentleman. In the age in which we live it is well sometimes to think of these things. It would be untrue to say that loyalty has diminished, nor is there any lack of patriotism. But it is impossible to deny that a mischievous spirit is abroad. Men seem to have forgotten that loyalty is not only due to the crown, but to the state, and to those that represent the state. To defy the government, to make its task more difficult, to force it to break treaties and deny obligations, and to embarrass our relations with other powers, appear to be considered most praiseworthy actions; while to vilify those in high places, the great functionaries of the realm, is held to be no longer a stain on the honour of an Englishman. It may be useful, then, when such doctrines find advocates, to remember the example of Wellington, and to determine that, whatever may be the case elsewhere, the army will still preserve the same traditional loyalty, the same

reverence for authority, as did the greatest soldier of us all."¹

These are hard words to digest, especially coming as they do, from the pen of the man who taught a large number of educated British soldiers all they know of the science of war. British soldiers will be inclined to cast Ruskin's words to the gutter and take to heart those of Colonel Henderson. But we must not forget that Colonel Henderson died before the Russo-Japanese War—before the tremendous example of the efficiency of the modern nation's arms which has opened the eyes of all of us to the nature of modern warfare and to our own shortcomings. And we must also remember that the above extract was written before the Boer War; and that the work he produced after the Boer War has never been published. If it had been, it is possible that we should have found that his opinions on this point had been somewhat modified. There will be found none to deny that Colonel Henderson moved with the times; and none who knew him will hesitate to affirm that, if he had lived to this present day, he would now be in the forefront of the movement towards national regeneration, even as he was, in former days, the most ardent advocate of efficiency in the army.

But this action to be taken by fighting men is not one to be lightly considered, lightly determined, and lightly dismissed. It is fraught with the graves

¹ *The Science of War*, by the late Colonel G. F. R. Henderson, C.B.

possibilities—the welfare and security of our country on the one hand, its destruction on the other, according as to whether fighting men act from patriotic or self-interested motives. The soldier's duty is to his king and country ; and that duty, in normal circumstances, is to display obedience to those who are placed in authority over him. But it has never been denied that circumstances may arise which demand inexorably that the soldier shall consider his duty to king and country alone, and discard without hesitation pedantic obedience to his chief, if the latter has shown clearly that he is actuated by other motives than duty, or that his ignorance and incapacity will obviously involve ruin to the cause. In such a case, it is the subordinate who must judge, and bear his punishment like a man, in the consciousness that he has done his best, if his action is not upheld. Cromwell's whole life, until he came to the exercise of absolute power, was a constant effort to reconcile his duty to his country with his obedience to his incapable chiefs. There are certainly times in which duty to the country must rise superior to mere obedience.

Has not such an emergency arisen in Great Britain to-day ? If the political leaders of the country find that pity and contempt are gradually taking the place of subordination in the minds of British patriots and fighting men, that they are now being judged by their actions and not by their speeches, have they any to thank but themselves ? When there exists a lack of discipline, the fault, in ninety-nine cases out of a

hundred, rests with the leader, and not with the undisciplined subordinates; and, when there is bad leadership, indiscipline will infallibly, sooner or later, make its appearance.

We British fighting men are no children; let us think for ourselves in this matter—as so many of us have been taught to think by Colonel Henderson. If the fighting men of this nation of civilians take no action it is beyond doubt that the whole nation—including our women-folk, our mothers, wives, sisters and children—will be plunged into utter misery before many years have passed; whereas, if reform can be introduced immediately, it is possible that the situation may yet be saved. And, after all, those who move in this matter act with their eyes open to the probable consequences to themselves, and they are there to bear the punishment if they have done wrong. Let the people judge between them and the opponents of reform, and decide which displays patriotism and which the reverse.

Is the fighting man to remain inactive? Is he to watch—with deep concern, it is true, but without any effort to arrest its progress—the inevitable demoralisation in the army and the rapid degeneration of the nation? Is he now to display initiative, or blind obedience? There are two forms of discipline—the one which refuses to act without orders, which complains in time of disaster, “I received no orders”; and the other form, which accepts responsibility, and takes action without orders, or even contrary to

orders, in the whole-hearted determination to serve the true interests of king and country. Nelson, putting his telescope to his blind eye, refused to see, not only the signal of recall, but the possible consequences to himself; he saw only his duty to his country; he deliberately disobeyed orders, and saved his country.

Which course will British fighting men adopt? The last opportunity to open the eyes of the people occurred immediately after the Boer War. It was missed. Another opportunity now occurs;¹ yet another may never again occur, or it may come too late—it almost certainly will. Educated fighting men would do wisely to decide—one way or the other—and to decide quickly. The British people have tied themselves in a knot. The questions for British fighting men are: Can this knot be untied in the time available? If not, should they seek to cut it themselves, carefully and judiciously; or should they timidly await the moment at which it must be slashed off by the sword—a hostile sword?

In case British fighting men elect to take such action as they can to effect national regeneration, let us consider what action lies within their power.

The slave has never found but one means to make his presence felt—an armed rising. But an armed rising, of whatever nature, is calculated to reduce a nation to a pitiable condition of temporary helplessness.

¹ The temporary awakening of the British people, due to the efficiency displayed by the Japanese.

ness, and to place it at the mercy of every well-armed and prepared neighbour. It is a last resource—one to be adopted when all other means have failed, and when the country is already on the brink of ruin. Desperate situations alone demand desperate remedies. There can, at present, be no "dragooning" in the sense in which soldiers understand the expression, though politicians themselves appear to apprehend it not to invite it. It is admissible only to avert the danger that the nation will be "dragooned" by foreign troops.¹

His Majesty the King is the head of the army and the navy, and the most natural course to adopt is to appeal to him. But whereas Red Indian chieftains acting in the interests of their petty tribes (which are under the government of Canada), are permitted to appeal to the King, it is, apparently, unconstitutional for British fighting men to appeal for efficiency to the Head of the Armed Forces and of the Nation.

¹ There are those who laugh at the suggestion that a whole nation can be "dragooned" by its army. The idea is, of course, an absurdity. But a particular class—such as the political class in Great Britain—can be "dragooned" without difficulty, provided unanimity of purpose exist throughout the commissioned ranks of the land forces. The people usually acquiesce in, or even applaud, the operation. There are hundreds of examples throughout history. If the political classes in Great Britain desire to maintain their supremacy, and avoid the possibility that they will be "dragooned," they will, without delay, combine and introduce compulsory universal service, and train themselves and their sons, most expeditiously, in the science of war and of leadership. It is their only safeguard; for, in so doing, they will satisfy the educated fighting men and the patriots of the nation.

An appeal to the government would appear to be the constitutional method. The correct procedure would seem to be—so far as the army is concerned—for the Army Council to lay their recommendations before the Secretary of State for War, who is the virtual Commander-in-Chief of the army, and to resign in a body if their recommendations are not accepted. This course might, however, have been adopted any time during the past two or three years. It has not been adopted, and the natural inference is that it is not feasible, and that it never will be adopted. If, however, officers of the army petitioned the Army Council to take the above course it might become feasible. But such a petition might be construed into insubordination, or even mutiny. The suggestion which has so often been put forward, that the military members of the Army Council are content with the present situation, will hardly be accepted by any educated soldier until those members themselves state the fact in explicit terms.

The Chief of the newly formed General Staff, supported by the whole body of opinion of the staff, might take it upon himself to appeal for efficiency to the Secretary of State for War, threatening resignation if refused.

But the point is that any appeal to the Secretary of State must necessarily take the form of an appeal for compulsory universal service and the organisation of the whole nation for war purposes. Here we are at once faced with the difficulty that the Secretary of

State for War is a member of the political party in power for the time being, and that his interests are bound up with those of his party. Thus, though the appeal might reach the government, it by no means follows that it would receive any recognition. Will the opinion of the Army Council, or of the General Staff, ever carry such weight with the government as to oblige them to undertake the introduction of universal service with all the superficial disadvantages likely to accrue to themselves and to the country's own interests? It may possibly happen when the British navy has been defeated and the country is within view of invasion—when, in a word, it will be too late. Every soldier and sailor knows that appeals to party governments for such trifles as military or naval efficiency are sheer waste of time, and that they can only be driven to act by fear of popular wrath and the consequent loss of power. Before the political classes can be induced to combine for the introduction of reform they must, it is evident, first be educated to the necessity for reform. It is to be feared, however, that they would regard courses of instruction at the Staff College and the naval war college as derogatory to their prestige. They are, indeed, far more likely to combine in opposition to reform; and a suggestion to that effect has already been more than hinted at in the House of Commons, by no less a personage than the Secretary of State for War.

Will the Chief of the General Staff ever find his position of sufficient strength to enable him to claim

a right to express his opinions in one of the Houses of Parliament ; and is it at all likely that his dialectical ability will be equal to coping with that of trained orators ? The life of a man of action is the worst possible training for a dialectician, even as that of an orator is the worst possible training for a man of action. But, nevertheless, if the Chief of the Staff possessed the right to give his views to the people in the Houses of Parliament, then, indeed, we might see the dawn of a new era of efficiency in the army and the nation.

The only method by which soldiers can appeal to the people is through the public press. If they adopt this method, they act in direct defiance of the regulations. And neither must they hesitate to sign their names to their articles and letters ; for it seems obvious that the public will pay little or no attention to men who will venture nothing for their country. But then, again, the soldier who signs his name to his articles is apt to be regarded as a mere self-advertiser. Something might, nevertheless, be accomplished if all educated soldiers could be induced, with one accord, to write to the press. Or, if progressive organs of the press could be induced to take the matter in hand, and to obtain and publish the views of all educated soldiers and sailors, irrespective of rank, quartered not only in the British Islands, but in the colonies and dependencies of the empire, a consensus of opinion which might sway public opinion would certainly be obtained.

It will be seen that regular soldiers and sailors c by themselves alone, accomplish but little with entering into open and direct hostility with political powers that be—a climax to be avoided if possible. The auxiliary forces, however—militia, yeomanry, and volunteers—enjoy, at present the ordinary privileges of free-born British citizens. They can, with impunity, appeal to the King, to the Government, to the Houses of Parliament, or to the People. They will very quickly do so if once they recognise that, in a great war, they, in conjunction with their comrades in arms of the regular forces, will sacrifice their lives and devote their families to ruin—and all to no purpose—they will stand at the shop door in a hopeless attempt to protect the millions of able-bodied but effeminate “shop-boys cheating inside.”

If all educated sailors and soldiers, as well as patriots, with one accord, seek to instruct the auxiliary forces—or the national army that is to be—and to urge them to call on all the *men*—yes, and all the women, too—of the country to rouse the remainder—will that be inefficacious? Such a course will apparently, be strictly constitutional, and will not apparently infringe any of the provisions of military law.

If the fighting men of the nation—there are about a million of them—can combine and display unanimity of purpose, they will be in a position to insist that only those men who are prepared to fight, and

to undergo the necessary training, for their country shall be permitted to represent their country in Parliament, or hold any post in government employment. They will also be in a position to warn the opponents of reform that, in case of disaster, they will be held responsible, and that the punishment inflicted will be severe. If, in fact, the fighting men of the nation can concentrate all available force of argument at the vital point, they may avert the necessity for the application of physical force in the years to come.

Have these fighting men, who are to sacrifice their lives, no right to insist that their sacrifice shall not be in vain?

There is an eminent British soldier, who has won the confidence of the army and the people, who can surely be trusted with the work of reform. He, in conjunction with a statesman, has already reformed one nation beyond all recognition. Or, is it feared that this suggested procedure will lead directly to "militarism" and to the supremacy of the soldier? There are many great Englishmen, civilians, great administrators, men of action, not mere prating politicians—men who have established their right to lead by many years of arduous labour, men who have gained the confidence of the vast majority of their countrymen—will not these men, acting in the true interests of their king and country, head the work of reform, and move heaven and earth to save their country? Would it not be within the right of the

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Crown to appoint a Royal Commission, consisting solely of such men, to consider the question of national leadership, the capacity of politicians, and the necessity for compulsory universal service ?

Time presses ; and it is surely both wise and patriotic to take measured action now, in cold blood, if only in the hope of averting the necessity for the drastic action which must inevitably, unless reform can be introduced in time, be taken later, in hot blood.

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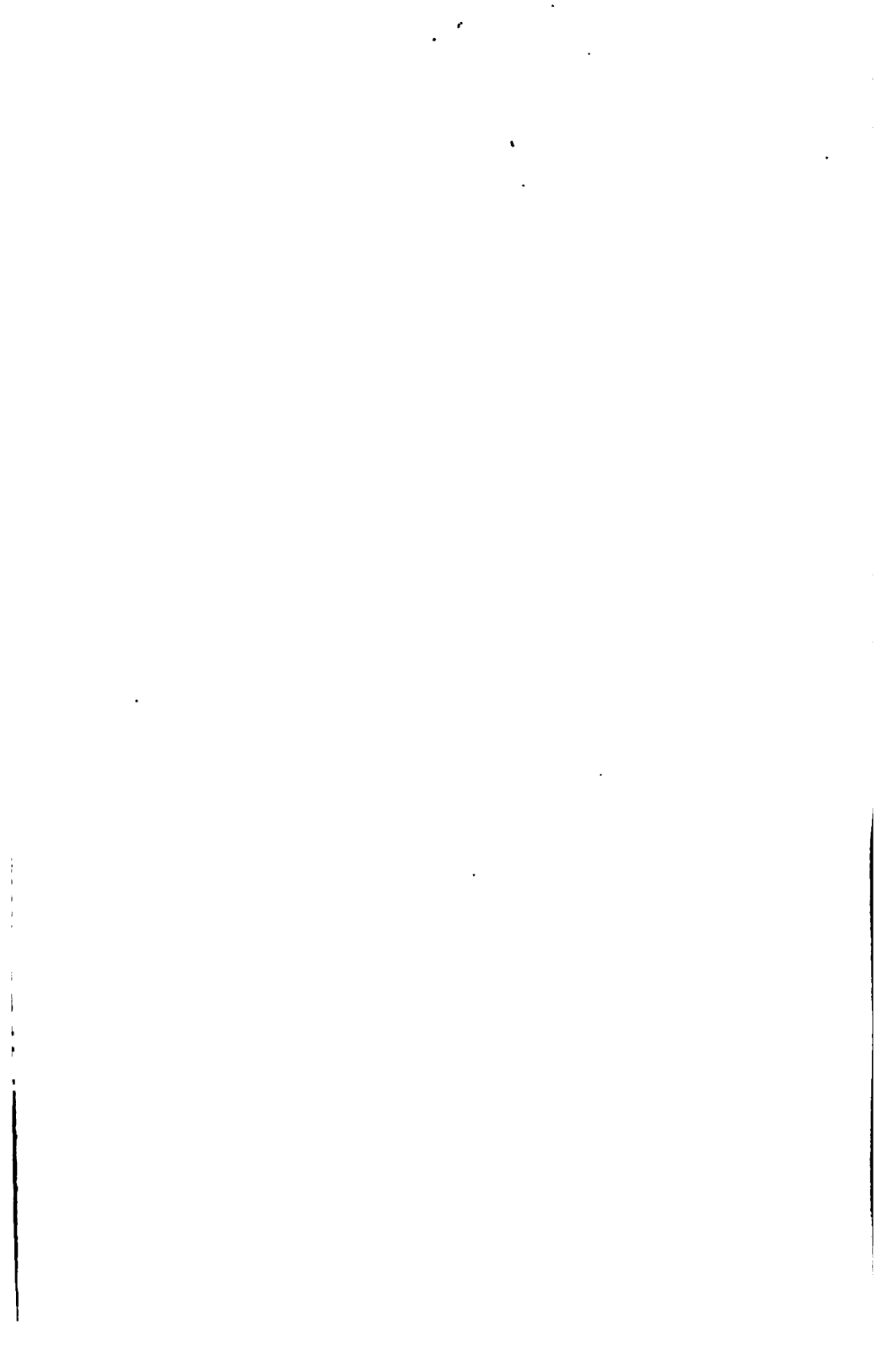
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